

THE GREATEST THING IN THE UNIVERSE—PART I

"Covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet I show unto you a more excellent way."—1 Cor. 12:31.

The Apostle James has declared that every good and every perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness or shadow of turning. Hence every gift from God would be a blessing. Even those upon whom God will execute the sentence of the second death may be said to receive something that is not really an injury to their best interests.

In thinking over these different gifts of God, the Apostle Paul enumerates some of those that were given to the church in the beginning of this Gospel age. We read in the psalms: "Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell amongst them." (Psalm 68:18) Some of those gifts were given to the men who became followers of the Lord Jesus. After Jesus had ascended, all his followers were to particularly wait until he would send them, from the Father, the power and blessing of the holy Spirit, which was to come to each sincere believer, and which was to be accompanied by gifts—by some outward gift and manifestation, useful and to be used.

In our context the Apostle enumerates some of these gifts—apostles, prophets, evangelists, teachers, pastors; others received gifts of tongues, healings, power to perform miracles, power to cast out Satan, power to interpret tongues, power to discern spirits. Some received one of these and some another; some received several. St. Paul had various gifts, and declared that he spoke more tongues than they all. (1 Cor. 14:18) It would appear that the early church thought very highly of the gift of tongues. They became very anxious to have God give them this particular gift.

But the Apostle tells them that God had still more valuable blessings than this of speaking with tongues, which they so earnestly desired. They were to distinguish between the different gifts, and they were to desire, were to prefer, the best—to exercise discrimination of mind as to which would be the best gift. He declares that he would rather speak five words in a known tongue than to speak ten thousand in an unknown tongue, and not be able to interpret. He told them that they should pray for interpretation—that they should not only desire to speak in unknown tongues, but also desire to give the interpretation, or the proper meaning, in order to be understood. In his letter to the church at Corinth, chapters 12 and 14, he expressed the thought that these different tongues and gifts were all intended to minister to the church for their benefit as a whole.

PURPOSE SERVED BY THE GIFTS

The gift of tongues was given at that time to supply their lack otherwise. The early church had no Bible. Being put out of the synagogues, they had no access to the Old Testament, and the New Testament was not yet written. Therefore God's people without these gifts would have had very little to help them—to teach them. None were qualified to teach the brethren. Only the power of God could give them this ability to teach. Therefore the Apostle Paul urged them not to forsake the assembling of themselves together. As they saw the great day of Christ drawing on, they should have great desire to come together and to discuss these things of God's plan.

And when they were assembled, it was of great advantage to them that some one should rise to speak. And they might desire, or pray, as the case might be, that God would send them some interpretation. In this way the church was drawn together and held together. They did not know what message would come in this way from the Lord.

We are not to suppose that God would thus give any very deep doctrinal matters. But it does appear that in this way he gave his people some milk of the Word, until the New Testament should be arranged—written and collected in an available form. The Apostle Paul led off with these gifts to the church. The gifts of tongues, nevertheless, were surpassed by higher gifts, some higher arrangements for them. St. Paul would rather that they should be orators, public speakers, or have an interpretation of an unknown tongue. This would mean more of personal contact with the Lord. Therefore they should desire such a gift in preference to one of less importance.

Then the Apostle proceeds: "Yet show I unto you a more excellent way!" something still better than those special gifts which he had been discussing—better than speaking with tongues, better than working miracles, better than interpreting. He goes on to show that these things would pass away, and be no longer necessary to the church, but he was going to tell them of things that would never pass away. Therefore they

should discern and seek especially the best gift. They should not only discriminate amongst these gifts and choose the best, but they should be looking beyond these to a developed condition of heart which would be specially pleasing to the Lord, and would bring them into closer relationship with him.

He proceeds to explain that this is love. They might have the gift of prophesying, of working miracles, of healing the sick, of speaking with tongues, of interpretation, and yet come short of ever attaining the highest blessing of the Lord, unless they should incorporate into their lives this better thing—LOVE. No matter how well able they might be to speak with tongues or to interpret or to work miracles, etc., this love was a far more important thing for them to have. Then he enumerates the various qualities of love—meekness, patience, brotherly kindness, etc. The sum of them all is love. It is love for the brethren, love for friends, love for neighbors, love for our enemies, which would do them good, and not at all wish to see them suffer injury. This, then, is the more excellent thing.

Though the elements of love are developed qualities and may, therefore, properly be called fruits, they may be called gifts also. From the apple-tree we get gifts of apples; from the peach-tree we get gifts of peaches; from the pear-tree, gifts of pears, etc. Since we have to do with the development of these qualities of the Spirit, they are styled fruits of the Spirit. And they are far more excellent and far more to be desired than the merely mechanical gifts, which at the first came to all of God's people, because of their special need, but many of which passed away shortly after the apostles died.

LOVE—VARYING IN KIND

The question naturally and properly arises, What is love? The Bible answers, "God is love." As it is impossible to fully describe God in his greatness, so it seems impossible to fully describe all that would be comprehended in the word love. Love is the most powerful thing in the world; therefore love most nearly represents God, because he is the Supreme, Almighty One. We might say that God is not this, not that, not the other. And so with love—we might describe it by saying what it is not. Nothing can be right that is out of harmony with love, as nothing can be right that is out of harmony with God. The Apostle says, in describing love, that it does not think evil, does not vaunt itself, has not the disposition to be puffed up, is not easily provoked, does not take pleasure in iniquity, etc.

We may, of course, remember that our word love is made to cover a variety of sentiments; for instance, the love of a hen for her chickens, her care over them; the love of a father and mother for their children, and their care over them. Love, then, includes this interest in all that are under one's care. God has this quality of sympathy which leads him to look out for the whole universe—all sentient creatures, all that have life. He is bound by Love to look out for all these.

In human love—natural love—we find sympathy a very strong quality. Then we have a higher than mere sympathetic love—we have esteem, appreciation of some admirable quality. We say that we love certain traits in the character of some one. Again we have something more than mere sympathy and esteem; we have affectionate love. This is a very real and deep interest in every affair of the one we love—a deep, sympathetic love which would stop at nothing—even though it is an earthly love. The only thing that could be superior to it would be our love for the Almighty, which should dominate us as superior to this affectionate love.

Later comes in the spiritual love for the Lord's people which seeks to avoid all fleshly preferences, seeking merely to live as a new creature, and to look after the welfare of the new creature. Thus doing, we become closely united to the things of God and to all who are associated with us in the work of this Gospel age. This is the highest type of love on any plane of being—this into which we have entered. God is love. The more we grow up into this proper, spiritual love, the more we are growing up into the character-likeness of our Father, of which we read, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."—Matt. 5:48.

This love does not stop with those who are appreciative of it, but also goes out to those who are unappreciative, knowing that something is hindering them from attaching any value to such love. Love, then, is so much of God's likeness, the thing to be most appreciated, the thing without which all else in life is useless. To be devoid of love is to be devoid of God-likeness. And so the Apostle goes on to enumerate the characteristics of this love—meekness, gentleness, long-suffering, brotherly

kindness, godliness [God-likeness]—love. All of these are merely parts or streams of love flowing from the inexhaustible Fountain. These characteristics all proceed from love, and are strong in proportion as our love is strong.

JUSTICE THE BASIS OF LOVE

Next we inquire as to the way in which love fulfils the divine law. Divine law is not necessary as respects restraint from good deeds. There is no need of a law to say, "You shall not do too much for your brother, or give him too much money." No law is necessary along these lines. But divine law steps in and says, "You shall not come short of a certain standard." So the law calls merely for justice.

The Apostle Paul points out that since the law calls for justice, we shall not murder our neighbor either by our act or by our tongue. We must be perfectly just in everything pertaining to our neighbor. Every thought of our mind must be just, absolutely just. This is the standard of the divine law. We are violators of the law if we give less than justice to anybody. Therefore the law as set forth to the Jews, told them what they should not do. "Thou shalt not bear false witness." "Thou shalt not steal," etc.—telling them merely the things that they should not do. Whoever loves his brother would not wish to steal from him either his property or his good name. Hence love fulfils everything that the law could demand.

Love has no limit in its capacity; as, for instance, God's sympathetic love was exercised toward mankind after he had pronounced the sentence of death. That death sentence must stand, yet

" 'Twas love contrived the way
To save rebellious man;
And all the steps that love display,
Which drew the wondrous plan."

Love has done this by providing for the satisfying of the law in respect to Adam, so that Adam can be freed from the law sentence. Justice could not lay this obligation upon the Logos; therefore God could not command. The only thing he could do was to set before Jesus certain incentives. God set before him the joy of being the Savior of men, and the additional joy of high exaltation in God's love and favor and to the glorious kingdom privileges. So love might use various inducements.

Love with us must also be just. We can never take what belongs to one and give it to another. The sympathy may be there, but love cannot act in violation of Justice. Hence the advantage that Christians have who are students of God's Word. The Bible gives us the true conception of what justice is. It gives us the balance of a sound mind. The heavenly Father has sympathy and love, but he exercises these qualities according to the principles of justice. We are not limited to justice. It was not our law that condemned our brother, but God's law of justice. So we are at liberty to exercise our love beyond mere justice.

Jesus gave the example of one who owed his master a large sum of money; and when he could not pay, his master forgave him. Then this man went out to one who owed him a few pence, and, because he could not pay the debt at once, began to inflict punishment. We ourselves cannot render perfect justice, and we cannot rightfully require it of others. God, who is perfect and just, has a right to demand justice.

EVIL SURMISING NOT OF LOVE

Love, as we have seen, is that great and grand quality which more fully than any other quality represents our heavenly Father. Love includes a great many things—not merely generosity and affection. It seems to include every good quality—things that can be appreciated outside of justice.

The Apostle's statement, "Love thinketh no evil," is not to be understood to signify that love is blind to evil, or that those who have the spirit of love are blind to evil. On the contrary, love is wounded every day by contact with evil influences, and love cannot help knowing that it is an evil thing that is doing the wounding. Love is not, therefore, to be blind, and say that there is no evil thing—no such thing as sin, selfishness and meanness; all these various things exist. Love is in contention with all these unlovely things.

Love thinketh that there is evil, and our quotation from the Apostle does not contradict this. The imperfection in the translation may perhaps be charged with the apparent difficulty. "Love does not surmise evil," would seem to be the proper thought. What is it to surmise evil? We answer that we have various means for arriving at conclusions. We see some things. We gain knowledge in various ways, direct or indirect. And for love to have knowledge of evil is not wrong. But to surmise evil—to imagine evil when we do not have the knowledge—is wrong. Love does not surmise evil.

If we saw some one do an evil deed or knew in some way that the evil deed were committed, and it came under our jurisdiction, Love would not hinder us from punishing the guilty person. Suppose the matter is mere hearsay and the report not well founded; then love would be prompt to say, "I do not know that this is so. It will need to have proof." Love would wish to think well of every circumstance, every condition. If we saw that murder was committed, we would not be justified in surmising who did it. We might think who were the most probable ones, in order to make an investigation. We would think of the persons who had less love, but we should not hastily decide who is the murderer, simply because he or she has an unsavory character, an unloving character. We are to give him the full benefit of the doubt. We are to make investigation.

It would seem that some of the most serious wrongs have been committed by surmising evil. Evil has been surmised against people without a shadow of proof. It is not for us to say that any are totally depraved. Very few are totally depraved. But whoever surmises evil, even a little, shows that he is lacking in the quality of Love. Whoever surmises evil much shows that he has a very small degree of Love. Evil surmising makes countless thousands mourn. Surmising evil of others has caused more suffering in the world than all the battles that were ever fought!

The Lord's people are being taught of God, and hence are learning more and more to control their thoughts and words and acts. Our thoughts are to be kind! Our thoughts are to be generous! Our thoughts are to be just! We are not to allow an evil suspicion to lodge in our minds against anybody. The common law of man decides that no judgment shall be passed against any one until the thing be proven against him. Those who have done the most evil and caused the most difficulty are those who have surmised evil against others. But it is better if we learn this as a precept from the Lord's Word, and happy are we if we see the degrading power of evil-speaking and evil-thinking and entirely refrain therefrom.

"LOVE YOUR ENEMIES"

The basis of this instruction—that we love our enemies—is evidently that our characters may be developed. Retaliation is a natural element of the mind, and particularly of the fallen mind—the fleshly mind. The more selfish we are, the more inclined we are to render evil for evil, slander for slander, blow for blow.

Our Lord taught the very reverse spirit. We are to love even our enemies, doing them good in return for their hatred, and ever sympathizing with their condition and desiring blessings upon them from the Lord, while they are feeling the very opposite toward us, as indicated by the persecutions they practise upon us. The Lord says that we are to do this in order that we may be the children of our Father who is in heaven. We have been begotten of the holy Spirit, and by practising along these lines we become more and more like him in character.

Possibly at the beginning of our experience we may not see why we should do this. We must practise along this line in order that we may develop his character. Some one might ask, Will not God punish his enemies? Yes! "All the wicked will God destroy." Does not God punish those who sin? Yes, all who sin will suffer. Then why should not we practise along this same line? Because we are not yet qualified to do so. In time, we shall be judges of mankind, but we shall not be prepared for this until we have first learned the lesson of love. We would be too severe, and would not be inclined to do them all the good that God would have us do them.

Does God require us to love where he does not love? Oh, no! "God so loved the world"—when they were yet sinners! Has God then not a love for mankind? Yes, He has a certain love for all mankind. He will see that every righteous act will have a just recompense of reward. And he will make reasonable allowance for all with whom he deals. He has a broad, sympathetic love, and wishes to make allowance for these in the way which he sees to be best for them.

When we practise this love to our enemies, we are developing a side of our character which is much unbalanced. If we get this side balanced, the other side will become balanced also. Naturally we wish to see that everything wrong is punished, and everything right rewarded. In other words, justice stands nearer to us in our imperfect condition than does love. Therefore, in order to be used of God we must cultivate this quality of love. We see why God is sympathetic with mankind. To all the wicked he is a consuming fire; that is to say, he is so opposed to everything that is impure that it will be destroyed, sooner or later.

It is because the Lord sees in our human family, the human

race, certain elements of Godlikeness that he is dealing with them at all, we may be sure. If from God's standpoint he had seen that men were only evil, continually evil, we may feel sure that he would not have made any arrangement for restitution in the next age. It is because God sees that some of the human family would rather be right than wrong that he is going to all this trouble of redemption, taking all this time, etc., to give these everlasting life. In the meantime he is granting the experiences of the present, which will be helpful to them through all eternity.

OUR PROPER ATTITUDE TOWARD ENEMIES

We do not suppose that God has a love for Satan, although at first he did have a love for him. But since Satan is now of an evil, vicious character, it would be wrong for God to love him, and it would be wrong for us to love him. Even the worldly condition we must not love. We cannot serve God and Mammon. We cannot love God and Mammon, because they are opposite. But as regards Satan, it is not our part to slander him, nor to express vituperative sentiments toward him. He is God's enemy. And God is able to attend to that case much better than we. So we are not to judge Satan nor to revile him. We read that even Michael would not bring a railing accusation against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke thee."—Jude 9.

We are to do all the good we can, and be as helpful as

possible. We are not competent to judge, to decree. It is therefore our duty to be fully submissive, and in due time the Lord will manifest the principles of righteousness, as in contrast with the principles of error. He will render his just verdict in due time, through his appointed channel.

In respect to those who ignorantly seem to be adversaries of the church at the present time, we are to have a sympathetic love—not the love of a brother. God refuses to accept any of these as his children; He merely exercises toward them sympathetic love. He does not wish to do them any harm. Rather he is preparing to assist them. By and by he will provide for them everything that will be helpful in bringing them out of their sinful condition. We would rather assume that all of the human family are what they are because of the fall and not because of wilful love of sin. To take any other viewpoint would be judging, and we are not authorized to be judges now.

Taking this viewpoint, we recognize that some of our race fell more in one direction, and some more in other directions, and that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"—the glorious standard which God has set. We ourselves need divine sympathy, and we ought to be glad to render sympathy to others.

(To be concluded in our next issue.)

"THESE THINGS WERE TYPES"

"Now these things were our examples [Greek *typos*—types], to the intent that we should not lust after evil things, as they [typical Israel] also lusted. . . . Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples [Greek *typos*—types]: and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."—1 Corinthians 10:6-12.

St. Paul's words have great weight with every reader of this journal. The above text, even in our Common Version, is very strong, very forceful, but its force is multiplied when we notice that in the Greek the word type is used; for a type is a very exact pattern of the antitype, which is on a larger scale.

The force of the statement is further intensified when we notice that the ends, or harvests, of the ages are referred to. The Apostle lived in the harvest of the Jewish age; and we believe that we are living in its antitype, the harvest of this Gospel age. More than this, in the Greek the Apostle's words imply a special pressure, or testing, connected with these harvests—just such pressure and testing as we know were upon the Jewish nation in St. Paul's day, and just such pressure and testing as are upon Christendom in this our day—the harvest, or end, of this Gospel age.

Literally, St. Paul said, "They are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages press down." Elsewhere the same Apostle urges respecting this same time, that God's people should have on "the whole armor of God" in this "evil day," that they may be able to stand. (Eph. 6:13) Here he suggests that in this Harvest time some of us may feel too self-confident, and hence not sufficiently watchful, careful. He urges, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." The wherefore of verse 12 connects this danger of falling with those stumblings and fallings of Israel which, the Apostle tells us, are "our types."

SUGGESTIONS OF ANOTHER

A dear brother in the truth writes us at considerable length concerning the five different experiences referred to by the Apostle as "our types." Studying these with apparent great care, the brother thinks that he sees double fulfillments of these types during this harvest time. He notes the invasion of Darwinism among God's people, as corresponding to the invasion of the quails among the Israelites lusting after flesh as against the manna. The teachings of Evolution ignore the Bible statement of man's fall, of the redeeming work of Jesus, and of the ultimate blessing of the world through his kingdom, and give the people in their stead worldly doctrines for religious food; especially the view that man has evolved from the brute by natural inherent forces. This temptation upon Christendom has led to great defections, and through it many have lost their spiritual hopes, if not their spiritual lives.

The second temptation, pictured by the worshiping of the golden calf, the brother understands to be the worship of self and the works of self, especially evidencing itself in the Higher Criticism movement, wherein religious leaders, seemingly in self-love, set forth to the people the product of their intellects as objects of worship, instead of holding Jehovah, who is set forth in the Scripture plan as perfect in wisdom, justice, love and power, as the One to be worshiped. The

worship of money, also, he thinks is incidental to the decline of the worship of the true God. The temptation also has resulted in much spiritual harm and death.

The third temptation he also interprets symbolically, understanding it to mean improper combinations as between things spiritual and things temporal, and between things true and things false, as represented in the tendency to mix religion and pleasure and money-getting, and also the disposition to combine various religions with politics. This also, he suggests, has caused considerable destruction of spirituality in Christendom.

The fourth test, styled by the Apostle as "tempting Christ," was a rebellion against Moses, who typified Christ. The people desired to take a short-cut through the land of Edom, thus to enter the Promised Land, whereas Moses directed their course by a more circuitous journey through the wilderness. Our brother sees in this a type of how in our day there has arisen in all the nominal churches an opposition to the narrow way of self-sacrifice—the wilderness journey toward the Canaan of rest—a desire to make a short-cut, taking in the pleasures of this present life and the fellowship of the world. This temptation is represented by the official removal of restrictions upon Christian conduct, by which it has become popular for Christians to become theatre-goers, novel readers, game players, society people, and social and political reformers, supposedly the highest type of Christian workers.

There is a murmuring against the "narrow way" of discipleship—a murmuring against the voice of the Lord through the Scriptures and against all those who walk in that wilderness way, in the footsteps of Jesus, and who teach others so to do. The fiery serpents have bitten many of these murmurers. Many are sick because of these bites, and only a recognition of the efficacy of the Redeemer's blood can save them unto everlasting life. Thank God, for many of them there will be a further opportunity for looking to Jesus than has been afforded in the present life!

The fulfilment of the fifth of these types of the trials and testings of this harvest period our brother believes to be just upon us, and will be by far the most severe test, and will mean the spiritual death of large numbers. He is inclined to connect its fulfilment with THE WATCH TOWER publications and the wide murmurings against them—as mouthpieces of God.

In all of these "our types," the brother thinks he finds not only nominal Christendom involved, but also in a special sense those of God's people who see and appreciate the time in which we are living as the harvest time, and who are enjoying the "meat in due season" now provided for the household of faith. It is unnecessary for us to elaborate the brother's application of the first four of these temptations, tests, as they have had fulfilment in connection with the harvest work and THE WATCH TOWER publications. We will,

therefore, be content to elaborate a little his view of the fifth of these trials belonging to this harvest time, and written for our admonition, as "our types."

THE "VOW" REPRESENTED IN THE TASSELS

In Numbers 16, we have in great detail the fifth of "these things written for our admonition," as "our types." Our brother urges that the account really begins with the last four verses of Numbers 15. There the Lord directed Moses, saying, "Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments, throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue. And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart, and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring; that ye may remember and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God."—Num. 15:38-40.

The brother points out that the word here rendered fringe is in the Hebrew *tsitsith*, and signifies a tassel. The Jews still follow this command. Next to their skin they wear a holy cloth a few inches long, over their chests and backs, with a hole in the center for the head, much resembling a garment worn by the priests. Upon the corners of the holy cloth they fasten tassels tied with blue ribbon. The symbolism is "Holiness to the Lord."

Interpreting this, the brother suggests that it was a new commandment or counsel given by Moses as the Lord's mouthpiece, and that it was this that led to the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, Abiram and On, with two hundred and fifty of the principal men of Israel. Ostensibly their rebellion was not against God, but against Moses; but really it was against God, because Moses merely acted as his mouthpiece.

Applying these things, the brother suggests that the "Vow unto the Lord" suggested in the columns of THE WATCH TOWER as an aid to greater holiness and as an assistance in remembering the Lord's commandments, was presented to the Lord's people in 1908. True, the vow was not presented as a command from God, but merely as a suggestion of something which would help the spiritual Israelites in their endeavor to grow in grace and knowledge and love, in holiness and in sympathetic fellowship with each other, remembering each other and all the interests of the Work daily at the throne of heavenly grace. This suggestion of something for their spiritual advantage and for their protection in this "evil day," when it is a question of "who shall be able to stand," was expected to bring a hearty response from all who are "Israelites indeed."

After Moses had given the instructions from the Lord respecting the fringes, etc., to the surprise of many, there followed immediately an uprising amongst the Levites—amongst the consecrated—under the leadership of Korah. The uproar was seemingly on the question of holiness. "Two hundred and fifty of the princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown, . . . gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them; wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?"—Num. 16:2, 3.

The suggested application of this type is that as "our type" the "fringe" tied with a blue ribbon (Num. 15:38) represents the vow, we looking upon it as a means of grace, as an assistance toward the remembering of all the commandments of the Lord to do them, and that "Ye speak not after your own heart and your own minds." The vow is a suggestion that we remember God's commandments and speak not after our own heart of the flesh, nor after our own wisdom, but that we remember and do all of God's will and requirements and glorify our God. The rising of Korah, Dathan, Abiram and On, with the two hundred and fifty of the principal men of the congregation, represented in type the opposition engendered against the Lord's harvest work, now being carried on through this journal and the Watch Tower Society, and which took for its text, in opposition to the Vow suggested, "Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them." Wherefore then lift ye up so

high a standard of the Lord? Why lift up so high a standard of righteous endeavor of thought and word and deed?

MOSES EXPOSTULATED IN VAIN

How Moses entreated and expostulated, and how he was reviled, is described in Numbers 16:4-35, also the final result—that Korah, Dathan, Abiram and their families were swallowed up by the opening of the earth, and the band of two hundred and fifty were destroyed by fire. This is interpreted to signify that those rebellious ones who posed as being so holy were disapproved of the Lord, and in some manner, in the antitype, will lose their spiritual life—possibly by being swallowed up, or consumed, by worldliness, business, etc. Our interpreter suggests that this taking of censers and offering of incense by these men, pictures the bringing forth of many tracts and pamphlets as offerings of incense to God by those who oppose us.

Aaron stood in the midst of the offerers with his censer and incense, and his offering alone was accepted. The brother also calls our attention to the sequel of the matter, which he believes may yet in some degree be future.

The children of Israel, instead of recognizing the Justice of the Lord in dealing with those who were rebellious against his divine arrangements, condemned Moses and Aaron for the death of Korah, Dathan and Abiram and the two hundred and fifty transgressors, ignoring the Lord's relationship to the matter entirely. (Verse 41) A host of them gathered against Moses and Aaron, and murmured, saying, "Ye have killed the people of the Lord!" The result was that the Lord's anger was aroused against the murmurers. A plague broke out amongst them, so that fourteen thousand seven hundred perished as a result. And the remainder were spared because of the haste of Aaron in running into the midst of the afflicted people with the holy and acceptable incense. The brother suggests that this was next to the most destructive plague of the five, and that this is the portion which the Apostle specially emphasized when saying, "These things were our types." "Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer."

LESSONS WE MAY SAFELY LEARN

Without fully endorsing every item of the foregoing, we must say that some features of these, "our types," fit reasonably well to the interpretations suggested. However, entirely aside from these types, entirely aside from this or any other interpretation of them, we know that we are living in the "hour of temptation" (Rev. 3:10), in the "evil day," in which this age will be merged into the new dispensation. We surely know that "Judgment begins with the house of God." We surely know that it is to extend eventually to all Christendom. If the Judgment, or trial, or fiery testing, of the world, will mean to them "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation," it will surely mean a time of fiery trial to the household of faith, with whom it begins. The question is, "Who shall be able to stand?" The answer is, the holy—the sanctified in Christ Jesus.

The spirit of rebellion against all laws, rules, regulations, human and divine, seems to be in the very air we breathe. It is a time therefore for the child of God to be seeking peace and pursuing it increasingly, as far as possible with all, acting as peacemakers and not as strife breeders. It is a time when many seem prompted to offer incense which the Lord has not commissioned them to offer. The spirit of ambition, rivalry and desire to be greatest amongst the Lord's people is one of the most dangerous foes of the church, not only to those over whom they rule, but also to those who will be the rulers and teachers. The lesson to every one of us is, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."

Another lesson is that loyalty to God means that we shall remember that he has undertaken the supervision of his church's affairs, and that he is competent for all that he has undertaken. Consequently, the loyal and obedient must be careful how they undertake to be or to do, to make or to break, anything connected with the work of the Lord. They are more and more to expect and look for divine leadings in all of their affairs, and equally in the affairs of the church of Christ.

A CURE FOR SURFACE CANCER

Cancer troubles are becoming more numerous. We know of no remedy for internal cancers except surgery. Even then a cure is doubtful. We have recently learned of a very effective and simple remedy for cancers which show themselves on the surface of the body. We are informed that a physician, after testing this remedy, paid \$1,000 for the information, and that he has established a Cancer Hospital which is doing good work. The recipe has come to us free and we are willing to

communicate the formula, but to those only who are troubled with surface cancers and who will write to us directly, stating particulars. No fee will be charged, but in order to protect the sufferers, we require a promise that they will not sell the formula to others, nor receive pay for the use of it, nor communicate the formula to anybody. Any one known to be a sufferer can be informed of the terms on which the prescription is obtainable through us.

"HE COMETH WITH CLOUDS"

"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him."—Revelation 1:7.

This Scripture is generally quoted as a proof that our Lord Jesus at his second coming will be visible to the whole human family; that they will all have great mourning when they see him; that it will be a sad day for them—especially for the Jews. Our thought respecting the passage, in the light of other Scriptures, is different from this. In the first place, the Lord himself said, "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more, but ye shall see me." Only the Lord's faithful followers were to see him. The Apostle Paul explains that Jesus' followers will see him because they are to be changed in the first resurrection, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." The Scriptures clearly indicate that our Lord's present condition is the heavenly, the spirit condition, not only as high a condition as before he came into the world, but still higher.

The Lord prayed to the Father that he would glorify him with the glory that he had with him before he came into the world—"before the world was." The Father assured him that he had glorified him and would glorify him again. (John 17:5; 12:28 Vatican MS.) The Scriptures also assure us that our Lord in his glorified condition is far above angels, principalities and powers. (Philippians 2:9, 10) When he was a man, he was "a little lower than the angels." (Heb. 2:6-9) The Scriptures declare that the Lord is now the express image of the Father's person (Heb. 1:3), and also declare of him, "whom no man hath seen nor can see."

Another Scripture tells us that the coming of Christ will be for the blessing of the world. The very object of his coming will be for the lifting up of the poor and fallen race. St. Peter tells us that there will be "times of refreshing," "times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of ALL his holy prophets since the world began."—Acts 3:19-21.

How shall we harmonize this last statement with that of our text, which says that he shall come with clouds; that every eye shall see him; and that all mankind "shall wail because of him"? The answer is that in harmony with other Scriptures the coming with clouds would signify the coming in a period of trouble—the word "clouds" being used to signify trouble—in the dark day. He is coming in clouds, in that the time in which he will first manifest himself to the world will be a very dark day to the world—"a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation," and, we are told, never shall be again. (Matt. 24:21) That will be a dark, cloudy day.

In that day, ultimately all eyes shall be opened; and all mankind shall see him with the eyes of their understanding—see him in the sense that we see him now, and have knowledge

of him and of the Father. A blind man sees in the same sense. He says, "I see now"—meaning that he sees with his intellectual sight. It is far better to see with the intellect than with the natural sight.

Darkness now covers the earth. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of all those who believe not." (2 Corinthians 4:4) There are a great many blinded minds at the present time. They do not know the object of Christ's coming. They do not have the Scriptural teaching as to why he comes. But their blinded eyes shall be opened. Every human being shall come to an understanding of the fact that the Lord's kingdom is for the blessing of "all the families of the earth" according to God's promise made to Abraham and all the prophets after his day.

The Jews will come to recognize him. The Apostle Paul says, "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved" (Romans 11:25, 26) from their blindness, from their ignorance, from their misunderstanding at his presentation of himself at his first advent. Another Scripture says that when they see him, recognize the "sign of the Son of Man in the heavens, then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." (Matthew 24:30) The Prophet says that those that "pierced him" shall mourn for him as a man mourns for his only son. (Zechariah 12:10) Thus they will appreciate Christ, and their eyes will be the first eyes that will be opened. But at that same time, when their eyes begin to see out of obscurity, there will not be anything that they can see with the natural sight.

There is first of all to be a *parousia*, or presence, of Christ, which will be known only to his church, his bride class. The culmination of his work in the *parousia* will be the gathering of the church to himself in the first resurrection. The Scriptures go on to say that he shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance.

The "clouds of heaven" well represent the confusion in general. The world for a time will be in ignorance of his presence. But gradually they will come to know that they are in the time of trouble, the day of wrath, in which this age is to close. Then they will mourn. The whole world will be in mourning. If the world has mourned in the past, much more shall we expect it to do so when the trouble will be general. In the midst of that trouble, they will gradually learn of the grace of God. Human selfishness, they will find, has been so overruled as to lead up to the glorious kingdom of Messiah, through which are to come all the blessings which God has promised.

LIVING AFTER THE FLESH

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die."—Romans 8:13.

These words, addressed by the Apostle to the consecrated Christians living at Rome, are equally applicable to Christian people living all down through this age. The terms all during the Gospel dispensation are the same. They have not changed, and will not change. The call is to become soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ, under the banner of the cross, and to have the trials and the difficulties in the present life and the reward that will follow. The agreement of our consecration is that we will make a full surrender of ourselves as human beings, that we will give up our earthly rights and privileges, as we have control of these. It includes still more than this. It includes the giving up of our hopes as members of the world of mankind.

God's provision for the world is that they shall be recovered from sin, and brought back to the full human perfection lost by Adam's disobedience. We who accept the offer of this Gospel dispensation surrender all those restitution privileges which Jesus' death would have given us. We surrender these for the hope which the church is granted, not the hope of human perfection, but the hope of being accounted worthy to attain, with the Master, to glory, honor and immortality—the divine nature.

These are merely hopes, merely prospects. We do not see the glorious things themselves. We merely have the Lord's Word respecting them. We give up the earthly hope for the heavenly hope. These begotten of the holy Spirit are called new creatures. And these new creatures are to live, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. That is to say, they are not to obey the dictates of the flesh, but those of the holy Spirit of God.

MEANS OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

This holy Spirit that they are to obey they receive in several ways. Primarily, they receive it in begetting, and it is an influence directly from God. This spiritual creature, thus begun, is to grow in grace, knowledge and love—to grow up into Christ and into full development in the body of Christ. And this new creature is to feed on the Word of God. It is not only to use the Word of God, but also to go to the Father in prayer and note his providences. It may even learn some things by its failures and by the disciplines incidental to those failures.

These new creatures are thus to demonstrate their loyalty of heart, their confidence in God, in all these matters. And if they do this to the end of the journey, eventually they will reign in the glorious kingdom of Messiah. And those who will receive the reward of joint-heirship with the Lord, will be those who have proven their loyalty even unto death.

The great Captain of our Salvation was the first one who was given this opportunity. He was found faithful. He laid down his life in obedience to the Father's will. His experiences were the cup which the Father poured for him. At all times the language of his inmost being was, "I delight to do thy will, O Lord! Thy law is written in my heart." This is the course that must be followed by all who would reach the same goal as Christ, and be a joint-heir with him in his kingdom.

A joint-heir is a co-inheritor, one who shares an inheritance with another. The Father purposed from the very beginning that he would have, not only the head—Christ—but also the church, his body. "He who foreknew Jesus foreknew us also by Jesus." The Apostle says that, in bringing many

sons to glory, it behooved God to make the Captain of our Salvation perfect through sufferings—through the things that he suffered. And those sons who would be associated with him in that glorious kingdom must suffer also in the things through which they pass.—Heb. 2:10; 2 Tim. 2:11, 12.

Amongst the trials and difficulties through which the followers of our Lord must pass, are the besetments of sin and Satan, the allurements of the world, and the weaknesses of the human nature. Some of these the Master underwent—but he was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. We are not able to overcome completely, and so we have the imputation of the merit of Christ to cover our unintentional blemishes. Jesus had no such allowance made for him. We who are imperfect and blemished have this arrangement made for us in order that we may have an opportunity of reaching this goal. Every imperfection that we have is covered by the merit of Christ. Thus we are well started on this race-course.

We are not only to resist sin, but we are to lay down our rights. We are to count the spoiling of our goods all joy, knowing that our trials, rightly received, are working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. If any would be intimidated by the loss of name or fame or what-not, he would not be of the right spirit, and would not be classed as an overcomer.

TWO CLASSES OF THE UNFAITHFUL

We have been describing the faithful ones—those who walk in the Redeemer's footsteps to the end. But there are two other classes. The one class returns to sin again—as St. Peter says, "like a sow to her wallowing in the mire." (2 Peter 2:22) Such have no provision made for them. They have gone clear back on their covenant, and the Apostle points out that there is nothing left for these but "the blackness of darkness."

Then there is another class, who would not think of going back to live in this manner, like the hog, to wallow in sin. But they are held back by the fear of death, and are all their lifetime subject to bondage. (Hebrews 2:15) They fear that sacrificial death. They will not exercise sufficient faith and courage. They will not be of the favored class, because they have not a sufficiency of the Master's character. And yet they are not bad. They have a loyalty of heart. If this were not so, they would go back to the wallowing in the mire, like the other class described.

The Lord sees that these love him, and that under favorable conditions they would be very glad to live for him. But they are living in an adverse time. And the Lord in great compassion does not suffer them to lose all, but provides for them a way of escape. So he allows trials to come upon them—it is God's providence that does this. As the Apostle says, he de-

livers such unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. If such profit by their experiences, they might get into the great company class and be of the spiritual nature. But they will not be counted worthy to be sharers in the highest blessing, the divine nature.

A place in either of these two classes is not, as a rule, reached instantly. Any one begotten of the holy Spirit at one moment could not the next moment die the second death. There is too much of a difference between spirit-begetting and the condition of wilful sin for us to imagine that they could follow closely the one upon the other. They are opposites. It would be impossible to pass from the one condition to the other instantly. So this class prospers for a time, but as the trials, difficulties and persecutions incident to the Christian life come in they gradually fall away.

CAUSES OF FAILURE

In these classes there is a failure to live up to the standard. In both cases there is a tendency to take a medium course—neither to live close to the Lord and his requirements nor to drift away from him. As the Apostle says, if we continue to live after the flesh, if we take that course of life which would be pleasing to our old natures, we may know that it is the broad road that leads to destruction. And so if we live after the flesh and continue so to live, the end will be death.

We learn from the Scriptures that the Lord would not allow any who really love him, who are loyal of heart and have merely made a misstep, to go into the second death. The Apostle John says, "If any man [in Christ] sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous." (1 John 2:1) Let him come to the throne of grace, that he may obtain mercy and help in time of need. But any misstep would have a tendency to lead us farther and farther away from the goal. We are always to press on. The death of those who live after the flesh will be the second death; for these new creatures have already passed from the first death. The Apostle says that we have passed from death unto life.

We, this class referred to in the text, have received our share of the sacrifice of Christ, and having received our portion there would be nothing more left for us, if we should lose it. And if any of these misuse their share, any death that they die would be the second death. There is but one death to the new creature; for it can never be redeemed. Every provision is made for helping it, but no provision if it takes the position of a wilful sinner.

The Apostle says, "I beseech you, brethren, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice." And this is what the faithful are doing—laying down their lives. And this is the condition on which they will obtain the great reward of the divine nature!

PERTLE SPRINGS AND HOT SPRINGS

Our Western convention tour may properly be termed a series of conventions, of from one day to eight days' duration each. First came one day at Kalamazoo, Mich.; then one day at Toledo, O.; then one day at Jackson, Mich.; then one day at Kansas City, Mo. At all of these cities interesting public meetings were held, averaging about 1,200; besides smaller meetings for the interested.

Next came Pertle Springs, Mo.—an eight days' convention. It had an attendance of about 500, with occasionally 800, when swelled by the public. All seemed to enjoy this quiet resting place, away from distractions of every kind. The program showed fourteen Pilgrims. Besides these, others of ability were tried out on symposiums. Fifty-four were immersed—25 brethren and 29 sisters. The Editor's stay was for only two days. He hastened onward.

Oklahoma City was our next stop. Two meetings were with the interested, including about 100 from nearby places. Seventeen were baptized. A public meeting was attended by fully 3,000. A deep interest was manifested and we trust some were drawn nearer to the Lord as the eyes of their understanding opened more widely to the beauties of God's Word.

Little Rock, Ark., had a one-day convention with about 200 friends in attendance. The public meeting was rated at 700. The public is surely awakening to a realization that the lack of church attendance is to be attributed to a lack of faith; and the lack of faith to be attributed to a lack of knowledge of the Bible's real teachings.

Hot Springs, Ark.—Our eight days' convention here was none too cool at midday, but the friends had a most enjoyable time. It was a splendid convention in every good sense. The friends in attendance represented thirty-two States, to the estimated number of 1,000—though we doubt if there were

so many except at the public meetings, when the attendance ran up to the auditorium's capacity. Total number immersed forty-one—23 sisters and 18 brothers.

Amongst the items of interest here were three resolutions of the I. B. S. A., declaring:—

(1) That it is the sense of the convention that the time has come for the learned to inform the less learned that the Bible words sheol, hades, tartarus and gehenna do not refer to places or conditions of fiery tortures, but that the first two signify the tomb;

(2) That the earth was already created when the narrative of Genesis begins: "And the earth was, without form and void"; that the seven epoch-days of Genesis should be made known to the public, that the true harmony between the Bible and Science may be realized.

(3) It was unanimously resolved that the time has come for the use of moving pictures in teaching Bible truths. It was brought out by the discussion that the Lord sanctioned this in his use of parables and in the symbols of Revelation, which are word pictures. It was conceded that so important an avenue for reaching the heads and hearts of mankind should not be neglected.

The Editor later explained that he had been at work upon this very plan for three years and now had almost ready hundreds of beautiful pictures, which will undoubtedly attract great crowds and herald the Gospel, and help the public back to faith in God, and in the Bible as the Word, or Revelation of God.

Later, when endorsing the convention's resolutions, the Association's President declared that he would advocate the use of "The Temple," West Sixty-third Street, near Broadway, New York City, as the permanent home for the Gospel in pictures—"The Photo-Drama of Creation." He believed

that its use on seven days of the week, and three times daily, would prove a wonderful work of grace to many—much more so than to use it merely one day of the week for preaching.

This led to explanation of what "The Temple" is. Almost providentially a property worth nearly half a million dollars had come under the Association's control for Gospel work. True, the property is mortgaged for nearly its worth; but no matter: the low interest will be a very moderate rental. Besides, while The Temple will be the home of "The Photo-Drama of Creation," the exhibition will have numerous duplications, for the preaching of the Gospel far and near.

At Hot Springs, Brother Russell joined the excursion train. It consisted of nine cars, and in them about 200 truth friends, desirous of accompanying their Pastor on the trans-continental tour.

The convention was royally welcomed by the Business Men's League of Hot Springs, and urged to "Come again." Their letter of invitation addressed to the I. B. S. A. Secretary follows:

FIGHTING AGAINST GOD

AUGUST 3.—Psalm 105:23-36; Exodus 7:11.

"Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled: whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted."—Matthew 23:12. R. V.

The practice of injustice injures both parties—the afflieter as seriously as the afflicted. If this principle were generally recognized, fewer would attempt to practise injustice—inequity—inequity. The Bible especially disclaims against all forms of iniquity and upholds justice, which is but another name for righteousness. All sins are great and grievous in proportion as they are injustices affecting the rights of others. No lesson seems so difficult for people in general to learn as the lesson of justice, which the Master briefly comprehended in his Golden Rule, "Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you."

There is no individual who does not need to guard himself along this line. With the coming of the opportunity to take advantage of another comes the test. It has a thousand forms, but is always the same—injustice. It may be practised by employer against employee, by parent against child, by husband against wife, by neighbor against friend; or reversely. In every case, however, we may be sure that the one who practises the injustice will suffer as severely in the end as the one against whom it is practised. This principle finds a forceful illustration in today's Study.

SLAVERY'S COST TO THE EGYPTIANS

On various pretexts the Egyptians justified their treatment of the Hebrews. They were becoming numerically strong, and might aid the enemies of Egypt in case of an invasion. Therefore the Egyptians wished to hinder the increase of that people. Unsuccessful in this they enslaved the Hebrews. The slavery proved so satisfactory and profitable to the Egyptians that they afterwards thought that they could not get along without the slaves. Hence, at the time of this Study, the Egyptians were ready to hold their slaves at almost any cost.

Injustice—inequity—inequity—got such a hold upon the Egyptians that the plagues necessary for the deliverance of the Hebrews were doubtless a full compensation of justice upon them, equivalent to the injustices which they had practised. Truthful is the proverb which says, "He who sins shall suffer"—a just recompense, somehow, sometime.

The Egyptian plagues were miraculous from one viewpoint; not so from another. We are apt to style everything beyond our own experiences as miraculous, and everything within our range of experiences as natural. Thus Telephony and Wireless Telegraphy would rank as miraculous, did we not have ability to reproduce them, and to know how the results are secured. Similarly, the perfect flowers of our day, as contrasted with the inferior ones of fifty years ago, would be miraculous to us without the knowledge of how the improvements have been produced.

On the other hand, from God's standpoint nothing is miraculous, since everything is accomplished in harmony with wisdom and power divine. As we become familiar with the laws of nature and discern how the Almighty has accomplished certain things which we in the past called miraculous, it should not lessen our respect for the wonder itself, nor for the One who produced it.

Applying this principle to today's Study, we find that the various plagues upon the Egyptians can be accounted for with more or less of reasonableness, but the people of God should all the more reverence him who exercised that power. It is supposed that the ten plagues upon the Egyptians covered a period of ten months. Evidently they were part of a contest

DEAR SIR:

The Business Men's League of Hot Springs, Arkansas, herewith tender the International Bible Students Association, a hearty and cordial invitation to hold their next convention in Hot Springs.

In extending this invitation, we wish to assure you of our appreciation of the honor and pleasure you have conferred upon us by favoring us with your presence during the past week.

Hot Springs is to be congratulated upon having had your celebrated leader, Pastor Russell, in our midst, and you may rest assured that, should you decide to accept this invitation, nothing will be left undone to make your next visit one of the most pleasurable and memorable ones in the history of your organization.

Trusting you will favor us with an acceptance, we are,

Yours very truly,

HAMP WILLIAMS, *President.*

GEORGE R. BELDING, *Secretary.*

between the gods of the Egyptians and Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews.

The Pharaohs claimed to be the representatives of the sun god, while their slave people, the Hebrews, worshiped the great unseen, unmanifested Jehovah. Thus, when Moses by divine direction appeared before Pharaoh, he told him that the God of the Hebrews sent him word that the Israelites were to go out of Egypt to worship him. Derisively Pharaoh inquired, "Who is this God of the Hebrews?" The intimation is that he did not recognize him. He considered the sun god of the Egyptians the powerful one.

Moses was instructed to give certain signs by which his authority as God's representative would be recognized. One of these was to cast his staff upon the ground, and it would turn into a serpent. It was a notable sign, but Pharaoh called in his magicians, and they performed a similar feat, or appeared to do so. Some have surmised that they performed a trick said to be common in India—hypnotizing a serpent and making it rigid in catalepsy, so it would appear like a staff. Then, released from the hypnosis, it would manifest itself as a serpent. We are not sure, however, that the magicians did not do more than this, for the other duplications of the work of Moses through Aaron cannot be accounted for on the basis of deception.

What power did they use? We reply that according to the Scriptures there are but two sources of occult power—divine and satanic. Unquestionably God has for centuries permitted Satan and the fallen angels, called demons, to exercise great power. In no other way can the psychic phenomena of India, and, more recently, in Europe and America, be accounted for. And in thus saying, we are not charging that the spirit mediums are knowingly the servants of the evil spirits who personate the dead. Rather, we are excusing them as thoroughly deceived—blind leaders of the blind—who more and more are bringing the world under the power of these evil spirits, and rapidly increasing the numbers of the insane, who already number one out of every hundred adults.

WATERS TURNED INTO BLOOD

It is supposed that the plagues began in June and ended the following March. The first one, the turning of the waters into blood, was almost as miraculous as the turning of the water into wine by our Lord at Cana. Some think that they find the explanation of the miracle. We have no reason to doubt that some day we shall fully know how God exercised his power in performing this wonder, and also how the Lord Jesus operated chemically on the water to change it into wine. Undoubtedly the process is a simple one, if we only know how it was done. All the grape juice was originally water, and passed through chemical changes in the vine. More and more our chemists are learning of the secrets of nature, and the flavors of fruits are now produced by what is termed the synthetic process. Some are hoping to produce milk by this process very soon—the full equivalent of cows' milk—directly from the grass.

Travelers tell us that in the early spring, before the freshets, they have seen the water of the Nile as red as blood. This color is produced by some micro-organisms in the water. If this were the method God used for turning the waters of Egypt into blood, or to look like blood, Pharaoh had probably heard of such changes before, and the miracle would consist chiefly in the ability of Moses and Aaron to effect the change

suddenly—at their command—and in turn to abate it. The effect was sufficiently disastrous, for the fish of the river were killed, and the people could not drink the water. Still Pharaoh and his court held on to the injustice, and refused to let the Hebrews go.

The second declaration of the authority of Jehovah in commanding the release of the Israelites was backed by the threat that a plague of frogs would come. And they did come. Everywhere the land was alive with frogs and toads—in the streets, in the fields, in the houses, in the bedrooms and the beds, in the troughs mixed with their food—frogs everywhere. Frogs in vast numbers are said to come to Egypt at times, but apparently never in so great numbers as on this occasion. It was a notable matter. Still Pharaoh, when there was respite, was unconvinced that he was fighting against Jehovah; and still he held on to the injustice of slavery. Pharaoh's magicians in some way were able to duplicate the first two plagues, but they merely added to the difficulty. They were unable to take away the frogs. Pharaoh was obliged to appeal to Moses, saying, "Entreat the Lord, that he may take away the frogs."

The third plague was of lice. Dr. Merriam says: "The word lice probably means 'dust ticks,' so common in Egypt. This little creature fastens itself on the victims, sucks the blood, and in a few hours distends from the size of a grain of sand to that of a pea. At certain seasons, it is as if the very dust of the land were turned into lice. The decaying heaps of frogs would inevitably be the breeding place of innumerable insects." He quotes Sir Samuel Baker as saying, "I have frequently seen dry desert places so infested with ticks that the ground was perfectly alive with these vermin, which are the greatest enemy of man and beast." The miracle in this case would consist in the producing of these ticks in unusual numbers and unusual places—not merely in the desert wilds, but throughout Egypt.

It is well worthy of note that these first three plagues were shared by the Israelites as well as by the Egyptians, but in the succeeding plagues, as Moses pointed out in advance, the Israelites were spared. The Land of Goshen was protected.

The plague of flies apparently, as the Psalmist says in this Study, was of various kinds—gnats, mosquitoes, house flies and cattle flies. The poor Egyptians were in torment—suffering a just retribution in offset to their own injustice, while the Israelites were preserved in this plague. Pharaoh relented and declared, "I will let the Israelites go, but not far away." But when God's mercy took away the plague, he hardened his heart again. He doubted, after all, whether their experiences had been any special chastisement from the Lord, and refused to let them go.

ISRAEL SPARED, OR PASSED OVER

AUGUST 10.—Exodus 12:21-31.

"The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."—Matthew 20:28.

Christian people speak of the Jewish Passover as an institution, as a relic of the past, in which they have no special interest. This is because the meaning of the Passover is not generally grasped. Really the Christian is more deeply interested in the Passover than is the Jew. But there is one sense in which the entire world is interested in it, as we shall see in today's Study.

The tenth plague, sent upon the Egyptians as a chastisement for their persistent injustice toward the Hebrews, was the death of their first-borns. In every home of Egypt there was death, and that of the flower of their families, the first-born—son or daughter. The terror of such a night can better be imagined than expressed.

Death is always represented in the Scriptures as being the enemy of man—the penalty of sin. The death sentence came upon our first parents because of sin; and through them by the laws of heredity it has passed to all their children—the human family. We are all dying; and the Bible tells that the only hope of a recovery from death lies in the fact that God wills it, and that he has made preparation for the satisfaction of his justice through the death of Jesus, "the just for the unjust." It tells also that the great remedy for both sin and death is to be applied to mankind shortly. During Messiah's reign, the death sentence shall be abolished, the curse shall be removed, there shall be no more sighing, crying or dying.

On the contrary, the rolling away of the curse, death, will mean the bringing in of the blessing of life through the glorified Redeemer. Then he will become the Life-giver to all of those who, when fully enlightened, will accept the

THE CATTLE PLAGUE

The cattle plague came next. It was a very grievous murrain (from the Latin, *morior*, to die), a disease much resembling the Russian epizootic, which a few years ago spread sickness and death among the cattle of the world. The Israelites were cattle raisers and shepherds, yet this murrain was kept from them in the Land of Goshen, thus proving God's care, "that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth." The monetary loss by the murrain must have been very great. Then came the plague of ulcers and sores. Imagine the nation, from the king to his humblest servant, afflicted with distressing carbuncles!

The seventh plague was a cyclone, hail and flaming fire. "He gave them hail for rain, and flaming fire in their land." This was a fearful storm, "thunder and hail and fire ran along upon the ground" or rained down unto the earth. (R. V.) "Hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous." Their crops were destroyed, and their property injured.

The eighth plague was one of swarms of locusts, and probably resembled the plague of grasshoppers which some years ago created such havoc in Kansas and Nebraska. Immense swarms of locusts have at other times come upon Egypt from Nubia. They covered the ground for miles, and sometimes to a depth of fifteen inches. Harmless of themselves, they are an enemy that cannot be disposed of. They are apt to eat everything that is green, before they fly away. In the midst of this calamity, Pharaoh confessed his sin and asked forgiveness. Yet, when the danger was passed, he again hardened his heart to resist the Lord's way, the way of righteousness. The success of injustice and the hope of future profit therefrom led him to brave what he now recognized to be the power of the Almighty.

The ninth plague was one of darkness over all the land. It probably resembled the London fogs, in which it is impossible to see, and in which lights are of little avail, and which brings business to a general standstill. This darkness may have been produced by dust in the air, as some believe, or in a thousand other ways that the Almighty might choose. Yet the Land of Goshen where the Israelites dwelt was exempt—another proof to Pharaoh that he was dealing with the God of Israel.

Deeply impressed, Pharaoh yielded a little more than before, and offered to let the people go with their children, providing they left their flocks and herds in Egypt. When this proposal was refused, he commanded Moses to leave his presence and to see him no more upon penalty of death. To this threat came the calm reply of Moses: "Thou hast well spoken: I will see thy face no more." The next plague, as Moses knew, would be the final one, to which the hard heart of Pharaoh would succumb.

divine favor at his hands. The resurrection process will begin for the full recovery of all the willing and obedient of humanity to the glorious perfection of Father Adam and to the privilege of life everlasting.

What God brought upon the Egyptians in that night was, therefore, merely the same penalty that has been against all mankind for six thousand years. The penalty was not so much in the death as in the suddenness of it. The first-borns, retiring in good health, were corpses before morning, the death sentence coming upon them more suddenly than it otherwise would have done. They fell asleep.

This plague did not touch the homes of the Israelites. Their first-borns were passed over, spared, protected, by the Almighty; hence the name Passover. By divine command the Israelites made the anniversary of this event historical. Every Israelite shows his faith in God and his confidence in this record of the divine deliverance of his forefathers, when he celebrates the Passover—or else he commits a fraud; for it has no other significance.

THE PASSOVER'S REAL MEANING

The experiences of Israel in being passed over were allegorical. As a type, they represented the experiences of God's elect—spiritual Israel. And be it noticed that spiritual Israel is a company of saintly people of God, gathered from all nations and all denominations—Jews, Romans, French, British—"every nation, kindred, people and tongue." The chief members of spiritual Israel came from natural Israel, but no nation can lay exclusive claims. It is an elect class, chosen not along national lines, nor any preferential lines except those of character.

This company of spiritual Israelites was represented in the first-borns of Israel, the fleshly Israel who were passed over in that night. The next morning, all the hosts of Israel went forth under the leadership of the first-borns, who subsequently were represented in the priestly tribe, typifying the royal priesthood, whose royal High Priest is the glorified Messiah. Soon he and his "church of the first-borns" (Hebrews 12:23), glorified by participation in his resurrection, the first, or chief resurrection, will be installed in the glory and power of the Messianic kingdom, for the blessing of all desirous of coming back into harmony with God.

In the past, Bible students have been slow in understanding God's Word. Gradually, in the light of present privileges, they are coming to appreciate the fact that it presents lengths and breadths, heights and depths of divine love, wisdom and power, such as they never dreamed of before. Now they are seeing that when the Lord speaks of the church of the first-borns, he implies that he intends to have other sons, and that these are merely the first. Just as the first-borns of Israel, passed over, were not the only ones saved from Egyptian bondage, so the church of the first-borns will not be the only ones saved from the bondage of sin and death, symbolized by that Egyptian bondage. On the contrary, the preserving of the first-borns implies the deliverance of the remainder.

The expressions night and morning have a significance in the antitype also. The Bible represents that the six thousand years in which Sin and Death have held sway and enslaved many who desired to be right with God are a night time. During this night God's people have been more and more oppressed by Satan and his servants, typified by Pharaoh and the Egyptians. It has been a long night of six thousand years, respecting which the Prophet declares, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."—Psalm 30:5.

The morning referred to will be the dawning of the great antitypical Sabbath, the seventh thousand-year day. Then Messiah and his church of the first-born, passed over from death to life by divine power, will be installed in kingdom glory, and the great work of blessing all those who desire to come into harmony with God will begin.

That new dispensation will be so different from the present one that it is figuratively called day in contrast with the darkness of the present time, represented as night. In that day of Messiah's kingdom, he will be the great King—the Prince of Light. Then the prince of darkness will be bound. During that glorious epoch of a thousand years, the hosts of mankind who desire to come into harmony with God will all become Israelites, and gradually be led by the antitypical Moses to the perfection of Paradise restored. Only the unwilling and the disobedient will fail to attain the full recovery of all that was lost by Adam in the disobedience in Eden, and redeemed by Jesus' death at Calvary.

"ISRAEL MY FIRST-BORN"

Since any blessing, any deliverance from the power of sin and death, was of God's grace, and not an obligation of justice, he had a perfect right to determine long in advance that the blessings he intended to send should reach mankind through Abraham's seed, or children. This he plainly de-

clared, but in an indirect way. Unnoticed by the Jews, the Lord indicated that Abraham would have two different seeds, the one a heavenly, the other an earthly. Thus he said: "Thy seed shall be (1) as the stars of heaven, and (2) as the sand of the seashore."

God did not explain this to Abraham, but now we see the meaning of this feature of the promise. The stars represent the heavenly seed of Abraham—Messiah and his church, symbolically called his bride. The sand of the seashore—multitudinous—represents the vast multitude who ultimately will be saved from sin and death and recovered to divine favor and everlasting life, in the Messianic kingdom of the spiritual seed, the "church of the first-borns." Nor did God forget or turn aside from his favor to the natural seed of Abraham in the selection of the spiritual seed, for to them came the first privilege, or opportunity, and from them were gathered the first members of this spiritual Israel—the spiritual seed of Abraham. Of them St. Paul says: "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise"—the promise made to Abraham that in this, his spiritual seed, all mankind would receive the divine blessing—the rolling away of the curse of sin and death.—Galatians 3:29; Revelation 21:4, 5; 22:3.

Moreover, the Scriptures indicate that after the Spiritual Israel will have been completed by the change from earthly nature to heavenly nature, God's blessings will begin to come once more to the natural seed of Abraham. Thus God's providences were to the Jew first in respect to the spiritual privileges, and will be to the Jew first as respects the earthly privileges—restitution to human perfection.—Romans 11:25-33; Acts 3:19-21.

FIRST-BORNS BLOOD-PROTECTED

Let us not fail to note that the divine favor toward the first-born of Israel was not without blood. Indeed, as St. Paul points out, the whole lesson of the Old Testament Scriptures is that "Without the shedding of blood there can be no remission of sins." By divine command, the Israelites indicated their faith in the Lord by taking a lamb of the first year without spot, killing it and sprinkling the blood upon the door posts and lintels of their houses and eating the flesh within.

As the Passover was typical, so also were the lamb and the sprinkled blood. The lamb represented Jesus, the Lamb of God—spotless, pure, holy, harmless, undefiled. His death was not for his own sins, but for the sins of humanity. It is equally important to notice that Christ died not merely for the church, but, as the Scriptures declare, for the sins of the whole world. The church constituted only a small portion of the world; namely the first-born portion. As St. James declares (1:18), we are a kind of first-fruits unto God of his creatures. The church is passed over in the night, especially saved in advance of others; but none are spared except through the merit of the blood. That the blood covers more than the first-borns is shown by the fact that in the type it was sprinkled not merely upon the first-borns, but upon the house, as indicating the household of faith.

AN INTERESTING LETTER

GLAD FOR THE LIGHT-BRINGER

DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL:

I was very grateful to you for your kindness in answering my letter in reference to the gift of the holy Spirit. I reread the pages you referred to in the "ATONEMENT BETWEEN GOD AND MAN," and that, coupled with the misunderstanding of the Scriptures by the teachers in the so-called Pentecostal movement, finally convinced me that their leading could not be of God.

I was introduced to them last spring by a very earnest Christian, and three weeks after, I received what they term the baptism of the holy Spirit. So you know without going into details the conflict I have been through, and the difficulty to become convinced it was not of God, and the great fear that came over me, that if I denounced it I should commit the unforgivable sin.

I feel deeply grateful to my dear heavenly Father that he has led you to consecrate your time and ability to his service in so diligently searching and successfully finding a clearer interpretation of the Scriptures than has been given for so many centuries, and letting the light revealed to you shine forth so brightly to others. It has saved me from groping on in the terrible spiritual darkness that is now entrapping so many earnest Christians.

May you, like Brother Paul, fight the good fight to the end. Persecution, both secular and religious, will follow, as it did in the time of our Lord and the apostles, the latter being bitter, even unto the taking of their lives. With best wishes, dear Brother Russell, and the prayer that you may be richly blessed in the harvest work of gathering in the "wheat," I remain,

Yours by His grace,

(Mrs.) MARTHA PUTLAND.—Eng.

RESISTING THE EVIL ONE

The great adversary seems to be especially active now. About one-fourth of all the preachers in many cities have pledged themselves to an opposition to the Gospel message which we are sending forth. Unable to do this logically and Biblically, they grasp at opportunities to slander and falsify. They are co-operating with the *Brooklyn Eagle* and scattering a slanderous copy of the same which seriously perverts and

misrepresents the truth. These are being sold and sometimes given away free for the purpose of arousing prejudice.

A recent number of the Bible Students Monthly has been especially prepared as a brief answer and offset to these attacks being made by those whom Satan has deluded into his service.

We are prepared to supply free in any quantity a sufficient number of these little papers to serve any city or town which