

# ZION'S

# WATCH TOWER

And

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### NEW YEAR GREETINGS

We extend to our list of subscribers, and to all friends of our cause (all of whom we hope to have on our lists soon, as per suggestions in our December 15th issue), most hearty greetings, wishing you all A Very Happy and Spiritually Prosperous New Year—1902.

We trust that you were all greatly pleased with our report for last year. Its showing of a previous deficiency wiped out, and a snug sum on hand wherewith to begin this year's operations, are good cause for joy and for thankfulness to God.

The outlook for the present year, you will be glad to learn, seems to us very encouraging. We are expecting much, and believe the Lord's providences and his Word justify these expectations. We hope to prepare, shortly, an article dealing further with the Call of this Gospel Age: showing some of our reasons for surmising that the next four years should quite double the present numbers of the interested, and the present operations in the service of the "harvest" message. It will appear as soon as possible, and we believe will be convincing to all. We mention the matter now, in advance, because we think that some are slackening their efforts, through a mis-

taken supposition that little more is to be done. We hope to convince and revive them; that they may renew their efforts in the service, and thus increase their joy and their usefulness.

We know not what is before us in the year, dear brethren—nor do we need to know. If we have committed our all, for time and eternity, to the Lord's care, let us assure our hearts, afresh, of divine wisdom and power as well as love. Resting confidently in the everlasting arms, we may take whatever his providence may permit; not only willingly, but joyfully. If the year shall bring us blessings, prosperity and encouragement in spiritual matters, we can while rejoicing lay by a store of grace; for stormy times of trial later on. If the year brings us sorrows, physical or mental anguish, let us receive them with resignation: saying, with the Master, "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?"

If, dear brethren, life's experiences are accepted with faith, in the manner indicated, we may rest assured that this will be not only a happy but a blessed year for us. It is with each to determine this for himself under the Lord's grace. Faithful is he who hath called us;—let us be faithful.

### VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

#### THE TWENTIETH CENTURY CHURCH

##### An "Orthodox" View

The Rev. Haweis, of St. James Church, London, England, gives his views of this subject in the London *Daily Chronicle*, from which we extract the following interesting items:—

"The only hope for the church of the Twentieth Century is that it should make a clean sweep of 1900 years of theology and get back to Christ. We now know what this theology can do for us. It has done a great deal, for its statements at different times have approved themselves to different ages, and been the vehicles of a certain amount of Christian truth; but as Dean Milman said in his wise *History of Christianity*, Theophilus of Antioch, who invented the doctrine of the Trinity or, at all events, coined that theological word—did not thereby very greatly benefit the church. The same may be said of every other Christian dogma. It isn't that we don't believe the very important spiritual truths underlying every Christian dogma, but a form of expression of truth which is a living and a satisfactory one to an age immediately becomes false and dangerous when a better and a more complete expression is devised.

#### THE NEED FOR RE-STATEMENT

"The Twentieth Century church will insist upon re-statement on a large scale. Present theological text books are obsolete. They practically teach men and women infidelity. The Cimmerian darkness of Sunday-school teaching must be abandoned; the conscientious agonies of devout Sunday-school teachers must be relieved. They don't believe in the old hell themselves, but they have to teach it; the children don't believe it, but they have to put their hands behind their backs and tell the teachers these naughty lies every Sunday. The teacher does not believe in the Bible in the way in which he is supposed

to teach it. No one believes it unless he is a fool or a brainless idiot. . . . His creed, in the same way, as has been finely said, "merely stands sentinel over the heart to keep it empty." "I believe," he says, "in the resurrection of the body." He doesn't; nobody does; but he is not allowed to teach instead: "I believe in the survival of myself," which was practically all those of old meant by the phrase, "the survival of the self," being to them inconceivable apart from the resurrection of the body, and so on ad infinitum. Our mistake is in pretending to believe obsolete statements which once expressed truth, but which are now seen to be defective. We should discard them openly and plead for proper re-statements. . . .

"People now despise the clergy on account of the old rubbish they are not ashamed to teach. The twentieth century will not tolerate them unless they mend their ways. The twentieth century will go solid for fact in the shape of re-statement. 'Dear me!' people say, 'the working man doesn't go to church. How odd!' Very much odder if he did. The twentieth century will insist upon a clear statement of what we may call exact knowledge of God or the moral nature of the Sovereign Will ruling the universe. . . . Then the twentieth century will have to entirely change its attitude to the religions of the world, and it will have to admit that God has always been revealing himself, his will, his purpose, as fast as man could receive it and that the different and imperfect faiths and creeds are the result of the obscured mediums of the intelligence and the undeveloped spiritual faculties of man. The sun that always shines is seen through many diverse and distorting media—smoked glass, clouds or mere tiny cracks in a darkened room, or again the prism, sunset clouds, or through folded lids of

closed eyes seen hardly at all, but still the sun is always there. The teachings of Buddha, Zoroaster, Confucius, Moses, by a certain moral and spiritual solidarity, show that *all religions* are of divine origin, though Christianity is the religion which belongs to the fulness of time.

#### MISSIONS AND THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

"Then all this will surely alter the twentieth century church's ideas of missions! Just think for a moment. When missions were most active last century the universal belief was that all savages were doomed to everlasting fire. With the abatement of that fear there will be a certain diminution of enthusiasm to break up the privacy of their lives. We must distinguish between missions and missions. There is an enormous difference between attacking with the most inferior statements of Christianity, ancient civilizations and religious philosophies promulgated by some of the greatest and best men and deepest thinkers of antiquity, and simply interposing in case of savages in order to prevent cannibalism and slaughter. Anything which stops that is, on the face of it, more than respectable, although under the influence of clothes and the brandy bottle, which seem to follow disastrously in the wake of the Bible, what we call the lower races show a tendency to improve themselves off the face of the earth.

"The whole missionary method must be altered in the coming century.

"The Christian religion can only spread properly from the Christian life—the lives of Englishmen and Englishwomen, not merely from the Christian dogma, nor the Christian machinery, the Christian calico, or even the Christian bayonet. The only way for missions to be healthy is for the English people abroad so to improve their minds and intelligences as to make the natives come and implore them to reveal the secret of such marked superiority and goodness, which under their own faulty system they seem unable to attain. The real Christian influence should spread as Christ spread his religion, by enthusiasm for ameliorating the physical as well as the spiritual condition of the people. These things must spread not by way of proselytism—plucking the brand from the burning, which was the way of the Inquisition; true Christianity is the unconscious outflow from a positive life. 'Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works.' At present

what they mostly see is a whirl of Bibles, beer, brandy, mutual jealousies, shoddy stores and bad lives. The twentieth century must change all that.

"Don't I think the clergy want educating in their own theology?"

"Yes, but the more you educate them on the present lines, the worse they will be. The proper education of the clergy would consist in teaching them to understand the real nature of the Bible, instead of only teaching them what various theologians in the past have thought about the Bible, which is a very different thing from what modern research has shown about its records and the value to be attached to them. It is unfortunate that the chief doctrines of Christianity, as understood by the clergy, should have been left out of the Sermon on the Mount, the most perfect expression as some suppose of the Christian religion. It is also unfortunate to note that no one can read the closing chapters of St. John without seeing that our Lord can hardly be accounted quite sound on the doctrine of the Trinity, as it is stated in the Athanasian Formula. The twentieth century will probably read the Sermon on the Mount again. . . .

"Humanitarianism, or pulpit interest in Politics and Sociology, is a wholesome tendency as far as it goes, because it shows the irresistible pressure put upon the clergy to make their moral instruction bear directly on affairs of practical life; but it is dangerous as tending to confuse what is roughly called the secular with the spiritual. You can't insist too much on the fact that culture is not religion; religion always means one and the same thing—the sense of a spiritual nature—and dependence upon a spiritual source external to ourselves. I hope the twentieth century will develop both. They run on parallel not antagonistic lines, though it would not be fair to say they will never meet, for there is moral and physical intercommunication between the two. The church of the twentieth century will be deeply spiritual, even spiritualistic, I am sure, in a very wide sense of the word. Spiritualism, in all its many forms however people may dislike it, does, nevertheless, stand as a stout protest on behalf of man's spiritual nature and his spiritual affinities, and the twentieth century church will have to look very largely to the recognition and development and purification of these spiritual manifestations and beliefs."

## THE EARLY CHURCH

ACTS 2:37-47.—JAN. 19.

*"The Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved."*

The meager outlines of the preaching on the day of Pentecost, afforded us by the extracts from Peter's discourse, indicate simplicity, wisdom and courage, such as we should expect in those who were guided by the holy Spirit. The Apostle first took advantage of the charge of some that the speakers were intoxicated. He showed the unreasonableness of the proposition on the surface and then explained the true meaning of the phenomena, referring his readers directly to Joel's prophecy, "And upon the servants and the handmaids in those days I will pour out my spirit."—Joel 2:29.

It may be well to note in passing that Joel's prophecy is a double one, and that, probably for the very purpose of hiding the truth until due, it states matters in their reverse order; telling first about the general blessing of the Millennial age "*afterward*," and telling subsequently about the blessing of the Gospel age, which is confined exclusively to God's servants and handmaidens—"in those days"—during the Gospel age, prior to the general outpouring of the spirit which will follow the establishment of the kingdom.

Having gotten the attention of his hearers, many of whom were believers in the prophets—and "waiting for the consolation of Israel," which they promised—the Apostle proceeded to preach Christ unto them. He did not becloud his subject and confuse his hearers by saying: You have heard of great philosophers and great teachers amongst the Gentiles, and as Jews we have had some great prophets ourselves, one of whom was Jesus: but he came directly to the point he wished to impress, and declared to them that Jesus, the despised Nazarene, of whom, doubtless, the majority had heard something, probably derogatory, was indeed the Messiah; that though he had died, he had arisen; and having arisen and ascended on high, he had shed forth his power upon these speakers, who were now his representatives and mouthpieces in the world, to declare his mercy. Neither fear of rulers nor shame in confessing the crucified one to be his Master is the least apparent in the Apostle's language. He fully identified himself with the crucified one, and as plainly declared that the rulers had been wickedly and sinfully responsible for his death, in that they had incited the Roman governor to its accomplishment. He pointed out that this was no mischance, but God's foreknown

and prearranged plan—that it was necessary that Messiah should die as the Redeemer of the people, before he could deliver them fully. He pointed out that although it was necessary for Christ to die, nevertheless a heavy responsibility, a curse, hung over that nation which had thus, in its wickedness of heart, rejected and crucified God's Son.

The word of truth, as always, was a savor of life unto life or death unto death. (2 Cor. 2:16) To many the words were foolishness and had the death odor, and they passed on; but to those deeply interested ones who remained, the Apostle's explanation of matters was forceful,—especially as he backed this up by quotations from the prophets, showing that God had foreknown the death of Messiah, and had foretold his resurrection also, and this miraculous outpouring of his spirit, of which they all were witnesses. The record is that many of the hearers were pricked to the heart—conscience-smitten. They noted the aptness of the Apostle's quotations and their application, and the logic of his reasoning; and doubtless in all these things they remarked of the apostles what they had previously remarked of our Lord—that the teaching was not like that of the scribes and Pharisees, uncertain, indefinite, but with force, with authority, with distinctness, with conviction of its truth.

And after this same sort is all the preaching of God's true servants, done under the influence of the holy Spirit. It is illuminating and not confusing. Error is never clear; it is always confused and confusing. Clearness and simplicity, on the contrary, are marks of the truth. For various reasons the old, old story, which the Apostles here preached, is considerably neglected in our day by professed ministers of the Gospel of Christ. One reason is that those who attempt to teach realize their own confusion of thought, and need first to be taught of God through his Word, by his holy Spirit, and through such channels as the holy Spirit may use in granting illumination of mind and appreciation of the Word. Another reason is that the nominal churches have in great measure ceased to believe the old, old story, and have accepted instead an evolution theory. Only to a small minority of Christian people, therefore, is the true Gospel precious. The majority more and more have itching ears for something new—a new gospel of education, refinement and wealth.—2 Tim. 4:3, 4.

As the Apostle clinched one feature after another of his argument, and showed how completely Jesus had fulfilled the declaration of the prophets in respect to his life, his teachings, his miracles, his death, his resurrection, and the holy Spirit now poured out upon his followers, conviction of the truth was forced upon the minds of many of the hearers, and they cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"—is there any mercy for us, seeing we are members of this nation, whose rulers have thus despised God's grace, and crucified his Son?

This was exactly the condition of heart which Peter desired to awaken. He wisely realized that people must see the provision for their forgiveness and rescue before they will lay hold upon salvation. He would not begin by tendering mercy, but by showing the right, the truth, and the wrong. But now that his hearers were in the right condition of heart the Apostle did not seek to terrify them, but promptly told them of God's mercy and love, assuring them that they were still his favored people, and that if they would come to the repentant condition of heart they would be accepted of the Lord, even as the other believers were already accepted; and that they, too, would have the blessing of the holy Spirit and its gifts. There is a pattern in this preaching which all of the Lord's royal priesthood should take note of and practice as they have opportunity to dispense the good tidings. Instead of ranting, they should use logic, reason and Scriptural quotations;—and those convicted, and seeking to know the way, should not be terrorized, but should be promptly assisted and guided in the Lord's way, and assured of his mercy.

The Apostle was fully justified in telling his hearers that the promises were still theirs as a people; for it was clearly declared by the Lord, through the prophet, that Christ should be cut off in the midst of the seventieth symbolical week of Israel's favor, leaving one-half of that seventieth week, viz., 3½ years, of special favor to Israelites individually, after their national favor had ceased.\*—Dan. 9:25-27; Matt. 23:37, 38.

#### GODLY SORROW WORKETH REPENTANCE

Specifically, Peter's answer was that his conscience-stricken hearers should individually repent and be baptized. He did not make the mistake that some are inclined to make, when they suppose that sorrow for a wrong is repentance. Peter perceived that they already were sorry, "perplexed in their hearts." Sorrow is not repentance, but, as the Apostle explains, "Godly sorrow leadeth to repentance." (2 Cor. 7:9, 10) Repentance would be the proper fruitage or result of a proper sorrow. Repentance would mean a full retraction of all share in the great national sin of Israel, the rejection and crucifixion of Messiah. It would mean, therefore, an acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah, and the confession of him as such. And this, in turn, would mean that confessing him to be the Son of God they would become fully submissive to his teachings, become his disciples. Repentance, therefore, rightly understood, meant a great deal, and it means no less today than then. Whoever today refuses to acknowledge Christ as the Messiah, the sent of God—whoever refuses to obey his teachings, to follow him—is unrepentant; no matter how fully he may believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, the sent of God, the Redeemer; and, even though he sorrow at the record of the sufferings of Christ, he has not come to the point of repentance until he has renounced the sins for which Christ suffered, and become a follower of his teachings. Only such as are thus repentant have part or lot in the household of faith. God's proposition is not to save people in their sins, but to save them from their sins; and during this Gospel age the first condition of acceptance, and even a reckoned salvation, is that the sinner shall renounce his sin and accept the Lord and the righteousness and harmony with God for which he stands as representative. "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."—1 John 5:12.

The persons whom the Apostle addressed were all Jews, and hence he said, "Be baptized for the remission of your sins." Baptism is not God's appointed channel for the remission of sins; for, as the Apostle declares, "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission." (Heb. 9:22) However, the Jewish nation, under God's arrangement through Moses, was accepted of him as a whole, as a nation, and sin-offerings had been made for them all as a nation, and had been accepted, and a covenant had been made called the Law Covenant. Those whom the Apostles addressed, being under the Law Covenant, were under all these favorable conditions, under the blood of the typical sacrifices, typically justified and reconciled; and to them, consequently, God's promises pertained, as they did not pertain to the Gentiles, who had not come under such typical reconciliation through typical sacrifices. The sin which the Apostle wished his hearers to emblematically wash away in baptism was not, therefore, original sin, but was a sin against their

Law Covenant,—including their national sin in the rejection of the Messiah. With these purged away, with the symbolical washing, they would be back to the standpoint of true Israelites, "Israelites indeed;" and as such they would have every right and privilege belonging to the Israelites, but belonging to members of no other nation.

#### GENTILES GRAFTED IN

The Apostle Paul explains this relationship (Rom. 11), saying that the Israelites were the natural branches in the olive root of the Abrahamic promise. As branches already in that root they would not need to be grafted in, as do we who by nature are Gentiles. They were already in relationship to God, and all that they needed to do was to repent of their sins and figuratively wash them away, when they would be fully acceptable branches in the olive tree, which would not be broken off, but, on the contrary, would receive now a special share in the Pentecostal blessing. Subsequently, when exhorting Gentile converts to baptism, the Apostle Paul explained most clearly its difference from this baptism of Jews for the remission of sins. (Acts 19:1-6) He shows that our baptism signifies or emblemizes our introduction into the body of Christ as wild olive branches grafted into the approved stock, to be partakers of the richness of the promises through the root. (Rom. 6:3-5) We should, however, remark that the Jew no longer holds this same peculiar relationship; so that if the Apostle were addressing Jews today we believe he would address them exactly as he would address Gentiles on this point of seeking union with Christ. Our reasons for so thinking are: That as the national favor to Israel ended with the death of Christ, in the midst of their "week" of favor, so the individual favor to the Jew above the Gentile ceased with the breaking off of the natural olive branches during the remaining thirty-three years of their "harvest," which ended with the destruction of their polity, A. D. 70. A natural branch once broken off could be reunited only by engrafting—in no way differently from a wild-olive branch. Consequently any Jew, seeking to come into Christ since the day of wrath upon his nation, could come in only under the same terms and conditions as a Gentile.

The Apostle would have his hearers understand that the rejection of Christ and his crucifixion did not end the mercy of God toward them. These matters were merely steps in the divine plan for the execution of divine mercy;—the promises were still theirs, yea, they would be for their children, and ultimately for all mankind, however far they might be from God at that time. But he intimates distinctly that a divine election is connected with the matter, and that only those called of God could at present be expected to hear and to respond. And this we see about us today, and as we look back through the past. As Abraham sent his servant, and invited Rebekah to be the bride of his son, Isaac, so the heavenly Father has sent his servant, the holy Spirit, during this Gospel age, to call the antitype of Rebekah, the church, to be the bride of Christ—joint-heir with his Son. As not all the women of the world were called to be the bride of Isaac, so at present not all mankind are called to be the bride of Christ. Those invited to this joint-heirship must first be related to God, even as the one invited to be Isaac's bride was a relative of Abraham. Hence the step preparatory to this call to joint-heirship with Christ is justification through faith. The Apostle's hearers, being members of the typically justified nation, needed only to accept Christ, as the antitype of Moses, and to recognize spiritual Israel as the antitype of natural Israel, in order to be fully in relationship to the Lord's call.

Evidently the Lord was guiding in respect to every feature of the establishment of the church, and it was on this account that so large a number as three thousand persons were prepared to accept the message—to accept Jesus as their Redeemer and King, and to avow themselves his followers, his disciples. It is not necessary that we should suppose that they were all baptized in the one day, nor are we, indeed, certain that they all avowed their allegiance to Messiah in the same day; but that as a result of that one day's preaching about three thousand were added to the church. These were not added to a denomination, a party, a sect, but were additions to the one church, the body of Christ—members added to the one head of the church. We do not read that their names were enrolled as members of the church, nor that they took certain vows, nor that they assented to certain confessions of faith. He who accepts Christ as his Redeemer and as his instructor, who pledges himself to obedience to him, and to walk in his footsteps, has taken the only obligation which the Scriptures define as marking those who are probationary members of the true church. And it is still proper to make an outward acknowledgment or sign of this acceptance of Christ by a symbolical

\* MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II, p. 201.

baptism. The real baptism, the real consecration of the heart, or will, its burial into Christ, takes place first; the outward or symbolical representation of this in water is the good confession by which the individual shows, in God's appointed way, to his fellows or to whoever may witness, that he has died to the world and become alive toward God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

That the new converts were "Israelites indeed" was demonstrated by the fact that they did not speedily fall away and become cold. On the contrary, we are informed that they continued steadfast, recognizing the teachings of the apostles—that God specially used them as his representatives and mouthpieces for the instruction of his church. They thus continued in fellowship with the household of faith, and this would imply meeting with them every first-day of the week to celebrate the Lord's resurrection, to unite their prayers at the throne of grace, and to build one another up in the most holy faith. Breaking the spiritual bread on these occasions, they also united in a common meal, in remembrance of the Lord's first meeting with them and making himself known after his resurrection in the blessing and breaking of bread. (Luke 24:35) This has no reference to the Memorial Supper, which was celebrated yearly, and not with bread alone, but also with the cup, of equal importance.

"Fear came upon every soul"—reverence—an appreciation, to some extent at least, of the wonderful relationship to God into which they had been introduced, and of the wonderful power of God working in their midst, and especially manifested through the miracles and signs which the apostles were thus permitted to perform for the establishment of the faith of the justified.

#### COMMUNISM AT PRESENT IMPRACTICAL

It has been assumed by some that communism as that term is applied today, was practiced in the early church; and it is the claim of some that it should never have been discontinued, but should always obtain amongst the Lord's people. We answer, first, that the early church did not practice what is now known as communism; second, that something akin to what the early church did practice (but modified) still is the rule amongst the Lord's saints; third, the extreme view (and practice) of the early church was apparently not intended to remain, was never enjoined by the Lord nor the apostles, and serves rather as an evidence against the feasibility of the doctrines of communism under present conditions.

So far as the record shows there was no compulsory division of wealth, such as communism purposes. On the contrary, everything was voluntary; and everything of the same kind is just as free, just as voluntary, and just as proper, now as then—no more so, no less so. Some of those who owned farms and personal property sold them and brought the money and placed it at the Apostles' feet—gave it into their charge. Some may have given all that they had in this manner, but it is not so stated. On the contrary, various things give the inference that Barnabas, who sold the field and gave the money, may still have retained other properties, which no doubt he would have been willing to have disposed of later, and to have made similar use of the money as it might be needed. The sin of Ananias and Sapphira did not consist in their not putting all of their property into the common treasury, but in their deceitfulness in the matter;—in their pretending to give the entire proceeds of one property when they did not do so. Some Scriptures clearly intimate that some of the Lord's people at that time had private possessions aside from those which were put into the common fund. (See Acts 12:12; 21:16) It is possible, of course, that in the two instances cited the properties might have been given to the community and might have been returned when the community failed, and when the believers were scattered abroad. On the other hand, we think it reasonable to suppose that the selling of the possessions was merely to such an extent as was necessary to supply the wants of all—so that none of the Lord's people might lack while others had superfluity. This kind of brotherliness and common interest should still prevail amongst the Lord's people. Indeed, to a considerable extent it must prevail, or else we are none of his. We are not to forget, however, that the necessity for private provision of this kind today is less than it was eighteen centuries ago, for now there are many more opportunities for earning a livelihood, and many provisions for the aged, the sick and the infirm. The public provision for the poor today is probably quite superior to that which was accorded to the poorer brethren under consideration. The same spirit of charity finds ample opportunity today. On every side we see brethren and sisters having need, not of the meat that perisheth, but of the "meat in due season," the spiritual food, and having need

also of the robe of justification. There is abundant opportunity for all to join in dispensing these blessings, worth so much more than temporal good things to those who have need of them.

It is noteworthy that the apostles neither commanded nor advised communism; nor do their writings intimate that it prevailed in the early church. As showing that there were both rich and poor in the assemblies of the primitive church, note the Apostle Paul's words to Timothy, "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy: that they do good, that they be rich in good works, *ready* to distribute, *willing* to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold of eternal life." (1 Tim. 6:17) The same Apostle reproves some of the wealthy brethren for improper displays in connection with the Memorial Supper, saying, "Have ye not houses to eat and drink in, or despite ye the church of God, and shame them that have not [wealth]?" (1 Cor. 11:22) The Apostle John intimates differences in financial condition when he asks, How could he who loves God shut up the bowels of compassion against a brother, who lacks life's necessities? (1 John 3:17) The Apostle James says, "If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart, and be ye warmed and fed, notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit?"—James 2:15, 16.

Indeed, in our judgment, the necessary lessons of life could not be so well learned, either by the rich or the poor, if community of goods were either the law or the rule amongst Christians. There can be no question, however, respecting the propriety of *community of provision* for those who are in want, in distress. It is in harmony with this thought that the Apostle advises each to lay by him on the first day of the week, according as God hath prospered him, a share of his income—for good service to the Lord and to the brethren, in temporal and spiritual things. (1 Cor. 16:2) No doubt, after the Millennial kingdom shall have brought the willing and obedient of mankind to perfection, there will be some kind of communism such as we may presume obtains amongst the angels. Even then it will be a communism which will recognize some head or authority; for amongst the angels, we are informed, there are principalities and powers, cherubim and seraphim, and God over all.

The early church, full of love for the Lord and for each other, is a beautiful and in many respects an ideal picture, in which we can rejoice: no wonder it is recorded that they had joy, gladness, in their hearts, and in their thanksgiving to God, and that the people in general, their neighbors, were pleased with them and rejoiced in their loving spirit. How delightful it would be if all the Lord's people in the world today could be thus in harmony with each other and appreciated by their friends and neighbors. Indeed, we must suppose that the Lord specially shielded the infant church for a short season, until it should become somewhat established in knowledge and in faith, else the great adversary would have raised up opposition and persecution more quickly than he did. Even as it was, it was but a little time until the persecution arose, and with it the testing of those who had espoused the cause of Jesus. Then came the great scattering under persecution, so that those who had learned the way of the Lord learned additionally patience and obedience;—some of them even unto death, and others being scattered abroad became preachers of the gospel of Jesus and their newly-found hopes in him.

The Lord "added to the church daily such as should be saved," says our Golden Text; or, as the Revised Version renders it, "such as were being saved." As the same Apostle Peter declares, the salvation promised us is still future,—we are waiting for it; it is "to be brought unto us at the revelation of our Lord and Savior Jesus," at his second advent. (1 Pet. 1:13) But meantime there is a beginning of this salvation in the present life. Even now we are, as the Apostle declares, "saved by hope." (Rom. 8:24) The salvation is not merely of hope, either, but it begins to take hold upon us mentally, morally and physically—the regenerating work begins: the new mind, the new will, is the start, and from that proceeds true obedience to the Lord's Word, progress in knowledge and progress in grace, and all the progress of the new creature. It often, indeed, means the sacrifice of the earthly interests of the natural man, but it means the development of the new creature. It means the progress of the work of salvation in the heart, which alone God recognizes, and the new creature thus making progress is ultimately to be perfected in salvation by a share in the "first resurrection."

# SUCH AS I HAVE, GIVE I UNTO YOU

ACTS 3:1-10.—JAN. 26.

*"The Lord is my strength and my song; he is become my salvation."*—Exod. 15:2.

Probably it was not long after the day of Pentecost that the events of this lesson transpired. Our last lesson notes the fact that the believers, filled with their new joy, went frequently to the Temple for prayer and thanksgiving. This lesson shows us Peter and John attending the Temple service at the hour of prayer, three o'clock in the afternoon. These two had been with the Lord and with each other for now several years. Both had been disciples of John the Baptist, and previously they two had been together in the fishing business. They were also specially favored amongst the twelve, being with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, and in the inner circle in the Garden of Gethsemane, etc. Although Peter was probably the eldest of the disciples, and John probably the youngest, and although their dispositions were quite different in many respects, apparently there was a strong element of harmony between them—they both loved the Lord very intensely, and they were both of ardent temperament. It was natural, therefore, that these two should be considerably in each other's company because of special compatibility. While it is well for the stronger brethren to pray with and company with the weaker sometimes, for the assistance of the latter, it is well also that kindred spirits should come together in communion with each other and with the Lord, as in this case.

As the apostles evidently went frequently to the Temple, and probably often by the same route, through the "Beautiful Gate," it is more than likely that the lame beggar, who had long been accustomed to that locality, in seeking alms, had seen them almost daily. Indeed, it would not be surprising if a knowledge of the Pentecostal wonders which had converted several thousand, and been "noised abroad," had reached the poor beggar, as well as many others of the religious class, who assembled almost daily at the Temple. Quite evidently, therefore, the beggar knew Peter and John in advance of his healing. If so, it would to some extent account for his readiness of faith, by which, accepting the Apostle's word and hand, he was healed.

Why the Apostle Peter on this particular occasion was led to bestow a blessing upon this man we may never know, for it is probable that in that time, when there were no hospitals for the lame and blind, etc., the Apostles frequently passed by others as badly crippled and distressed as this one, without proffering aid. It would seem, however, that the man was an "Israelite indeed"—from the way in which he received the Lord's blessing. Otherwise, instead of having a heart overflowing with gratitude and thankfulness, he before would have been in an attitude of discontent, repining at his lot and complaining of divine providence; and in such a frame of mind his attitude after his healing would have been one of complacent satisfaction rather than of gratitude. He would have felt that he had received no more than his due. The connection, therefore, seem to indicate that the Lord's providence directed the apostles to him specially, on this account. And so it is with those of the Lord's people today who are in a right attitude of heart. They will, whatever their condition, find much to be thankful for, and can trace the Lord's providence and grace in life's affairs, notwithstanding its trials and difficulties. Such people are the objects of God's care, and have the assurance that all things are working together for their good. The Lord's providence may not always bring them physical health and strength, but it will surely bring to such the highest blessings which it brought to the poor cripple of this lesson—a knowledge of the Lord and a share of his *spiritual* favors.

At that time, when there was no provision for the indigent and helpless, alms-begging and alms-giving were entirely proper. It is creditable to the civilization of our day and land, however, that the helpless are provided for at public expense—all property paying a poor tax or alms tax. It strikes us as being as much wrong to encourage public begging now as it was right to respond to it at the time mentioned. If the friends of the indigent cannot amply provide for them the public can, and should, and generally does; and it would be a false pride which would ignore these ample provisions and not blush to seek others.

The Apostle said, "Silver and gold have I none." We can scarcely suppose that he intended this statement to be taken literally, for in the preceding verses we have the record that considerable property was sold, and the proceeds laid at the Apostles' feet—put at their disposal. But this evidently the apostles considered as belonging to the Lord and not to themselves—as trust funds. We assume, therefore, that the Apostle meant, Silver and gold we have none to give you, but we have something better to give you, something which God intended we should dispense. And undoubtedly what the Apostles gave was more valuable than money to the poor cripple.

So it is today; we are unable to respond as liberally as we would like to the requests which sometimes come to us for financial aid. The means which the Lord has put into our hands we understand him to intend us to transform in the main into spiritual food and clothing and strength and help, for the sin-sick and lame and for the error-blinded; and accordingly we are sometimes compelled to say, Silver and gold we have little to give; but of the spiritual blessings we are willing to give liberally—without money and without price.

Our Lord's words were, "The poor ye have always with you; but me ye have not always." In seeking to be helpful to brethren in the church and to the unfortunate in the world it is well that all should cultivate a largeness of heart; and yet it is well also to remember that in the cases of many of the Lord's children adversity has evidently been of the Lord's intention, to bring to them blessings which they would not be prepared to receive in any other manner. We are to endeavor to be helpful to each other, while seeking not to conflict with the operations of divine providence, and the learning of important lessons by those whose welfare we seek. We should never forget the Apostle's inspired words.—2 Thes. 3:10.

"It is more blessed to give than to receive." Undoubtedly every child of God has realized the truthfulness of this; God is ever a bountiful giver, and his people, in proportion as they cultivate this quality, generosity, are therefore cultivating a grand, God-like quality. "Do good and lend, hoping for nothing again [no reward]; and ye shall be children of the Highest." (Luke 6:35) If we cannot always give much money, or if we cannot give as much as we would like to give, to those who are in need, we may always, like Peter, give something. We cannot, like him, give health and strength miraculously, since we are not endowed with those apostolic powers; but we can give a word of encouragement, a kindly look, a helping hand over difficulties; and these will often be more valuable than money, and sometimes more appreciated. Even an "enemy" should be fed, if hungry; but neither friend nor foe should be encouraged in indolence, nor in wastefulness.

We notice how distinctly Peter acknowledged the source of his power, and how he was not ashamed of any feature of divine truth. He boldly declared his miracle to be in the name of "Jesus of Nazareth." He did not say, In the name of Jesus, the greatest of all Jews, the highly esteemed friend of Joseph of Arimathea, and of Nicodemus, one of your influential rulers; but, ignoring all such human weaknesses, he plainly declared that it was Jesus the Nazarene, the despised one, whose power had healed. We find some of the Lord's people today far less courageous than Peter; inclined rather to feel ashamed of the truth and ashamed of the agencies God has used in its dissemination;—for fear that these would be a reflection against it. We should rather follow the Apostle's course, and be very courageous and ready to publicly affirm whatever we find possessing *divine sanction*. Whatever agencies God may make use of in connection with his service we may be sure that he has some purpose, some object in view, and that his purposes will best be accomplished by plain, candid, truthful statements, like Peter's.

The description of standing, leaping and walking, may well represent the first efforts of one who had been born lame, and who consequently had never learned how to walk. However, the strength was in his limbs, and abundantly testified to the miracle wrought. The poor man was not ashamed of the agents whom God had used in his restoration. He shouted praise to God, and held on to his two benefactors, advertising them to the people, and thus advertising also the Gospel message, which they had to give, which undoubtedly was the very purpose the Lord intended. Here, too, is a lesson for us, not to be ashamed of those whom the Lord may use in connection with our spiritual healing—much more valuable, much more to be appreciated and acknowledged before God and men, than any temporal blessing. Indeed, the natural sight, natural hearing, natural walking, and natural enjoyment of every kind, are insignificant in comparison with the spiritual enlightenment and hearing and strength to walk in a spiritual way, as the spiritual joys are higher than the natural.

Peter was not self-seeking; he was alert to use every opportunity, every opening, that might come to himself, to the glory of the Lord and of his cause. And so when the multitude gathered together he used the miracle of healing as his text—as a demonstration of the power of the risen Jesus, operating through him; and he straightway declared to the people that this was the same Jesus whom their rulers had crucified some two months previously. He distinctly disowned that either he or John had any power of themselves to perform such a miracle; he did not say, either, that the healing was by a natural



law operated by the man's faith; nor did he say that the healing was by "Science;" nor did he deny the facts, and claim that the man's impotence was merely a wrong thought, the correction of which had given relief. He told the truth—that the man had been ill, but was now made sound by the power of Jesus. Nor did he spare his hearers, but pressed home the truth of the responsibility of their nation for the crucifixion of one who not only was innocent and just, but who was the sent of God, the Messiah, the Prince of Life.

Here is another lesson for us. When we obtain the attention of men it is not to be frittered away, either in the discussion of unprofitable topics or in personal boastfulness; but is to be turned directly to the Lord's glory, to the preaching of the good tidings of redemption through the precious blood, that it may be known that all blessing of every kind comes through the merit of that sacrifice, and from our risen glorified Lord.

## QUESTIONS OF GENERAL INTEREST

### ABRAHAM'S WIFE—HIS NIECE?

**Question.**—In the *TOWER* for July 15, 1901, p. 233, Sarah is mentioned as Abraham's niece. How can this be harmonized with Gen. 20:12, "She is my sister; she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother?"

**Answer.**—In olden times it was customary, instead of speaking of grandchildren, to call them children, as, for instance, "the children of Israel." "All the souls which came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls"—yet some of these were grandchildren and some great grandchildren. The thought is that Haran was the eldest son of Terah; that he had two children—Lot and Sarah—and that these were near enough their uncle Abraham's age to be his companions. Under the rule above mentioned Sarah, if the daughter of Haran, would be counted the daughter of Terah, not by his wife, but by Haran's wife. We would not insist that this view of the matter is beyond question, however, and those who think differently have full right to do so.

### PALESTINE AS A REFUGE

**Question.**—What are the facts respecting Palestine at the present time? Is it being rapidly settled by the Jews in colonies or otherwise? Would it be a good place for those who have a knowledge of present truth to emigrate to? Would it be a good place for serving the truth, or would it be a favorable place as respects escaping the coming time of financial and social trouble?

**Answer.**—We could not recommend friends of the truth to emigrate to Palestine. They would find almost no opportunity for serving the truth, and, as respects the time of trouble, we might say that the poor of that land are continually in trouble enough, and that even in the future the Scriptures assure us that the time of trouble will reach Palestine. Furthermore, not only would it be impossible to circumvent the Lord and thus escape the coming trouble, but additionally the Lord encourages his faithful people to believe that he will deliver them from the trouble wherever they may be. As respects the resettlement of the land; it progresses very slowly; first, because few of the Jews are interested deeply enough to live in such a country under present conditions. Second, because Jews have not been permitted to settle there since the Sultan's ukase prohibiting their settlement in 1892. Jews going thither are only permitted to land if provided with permits, which allow them to remain about thirty days. The Zionists are hoping to report some new and more favorable arrangement at their next Congress.

### CONVENTIONS ARE "HOLY CONVOCATIONS"

**Question.**—Are the conventions, such as the one recently held in Cleveland, and the One-Day Conventions mentioned from time to time in the *Watch Tower*, of real benefit? Do they not reach merely the rich, who can afford to make the journey, etc.? Are they in harmony with Scriptural precedents?

**Answer.**—Yes, we have every reason to believe that the Lord's blessing is with this department of the work, as well as with the other departments. Of course all of the friends are not able to attend the conventions, but this is not, we think, an argument against them. All are not able to attend the regular gatherings of the church every time, sometimes because of sickness, and sometimes for other reasons. If both husband and wife cannot attend a meeting it should be to the advantage of the absent one that the other does attend, because of the rehearsal of truth upon his return. Similarly with the Conventions. Our experience is that those who attend the Conventions and return home are greatly blessed themselves, as they endeavor to repeat to the brethren some of the precious thoughts they have gleaned, and to inspire

Our Golden Text surely represents the heart-sentiments of every member of the household of faith. The Lord is our strength; we lean not upon human might—neither of our own or of other men. We hold the Head, from whom not only come the laws which govern us, but from whom come the strength, the direction, the protection, the care, which we need and which we enjoy. The Lord is become our salvation; he has saved us from the condemnation of sin through faith in the blood; he has rescued us from the love of sin. He has not only revived us, but strengthened us, and enabled us to walk in the narrow way, and to do so with joy and gladness and leaping. He is our salvation already—the salvation that is to be brought unto us, and thus to be complete in us, in the first resurrection, is already begun—for we are already passed from death unto life, and have the witness of this in the holy Spirit.

their hearts with the letter and sentiment and spirit of the truth.

Furthermore, it would be quite a mistake to suppose that those who gather at these Conventions are wealthy; very few of the Lord's people are rich in this world's goods. We never advise anyone to spend for travel money that is needed for bread or clothing; but as a rule those who are in attendance find themselves abundantly rewarded for the time and money expended. In our judgment the conventions are indeed a great blessing, and it is for this reason that we are extending the One-Day Conventions in various directions. The Pilgrim visits are somewhat similar; they cannot visit every town, but friends from nearby places, seeing mention of their coming to the vicinity, can attend at small expense, upon writing us for any particulars necessary.

As to Scriptural precedent: We remind you that the Jews had numerous Holy Convocations; and that our Lord and his disciples frequently attended these, especially the Feast of the Passover. The Apostle Paul also hastened in his journey that he might be present at the Passover, and *en route* we remember that he sent on for the elders of the church at Ephesus to meet him, and hold a little by-convention. However, in matters of this kind, where the spirit of the truth is being carried out, it would not matter if we had not an exact correspondence in deed in the early church. For instance, they had neither books nor tracts nor journals, nor Bibles with marginal references, or otherwise. Some of these things are blessings which accrue to us because we are living in the most favored day which the world has ever seen. As our day brings many additional trials, besetments, enticements and cares, to "choke the Word," so, by God's grace, it brings also many opportunities for assembling ourselves in little and in larger groups. For all of these we give thanks, and all of them we endeavor to use to the Master's praise and to the comfort and upbuilding of one another.

### THE FATHER DRAWS NOW. THE SON THEN

**Question.**—In the *Watch Tower* you have pointed out that in the present time only a limited number are drawn, and they by the Father, to the intent that, following on, they may become members of the church, which is the bride of Christ; you have also pointed out as Scriptural that during the Millennial age the drawing will be general—"all men"—and that it will be done, not by the Father, but by the Christ. I recognize that these statements are in full accord with the presentations of Scripture, but am at a loss to know in what manner the drawing of the future will differ from the drawing of the present time, and this is my question.

**Answer.**—The drawing or influencing of all men, by and by, will be through the truth; and the same is the drawing power now. Few are drawn now, because darkness, ignorance, prejudice and superstition prevail, the god of this world blinding the masses and keeping them deaf to the voice of righteousness and truth, so that only they can now hear and appreciate the truth who have "an ear to hear." The majority of the race are fallen, and their appreciation of the principles of righteousness is too warped and twisted to permit the truth to have its proper weight and influence upon their hearts in drawing them to the Lord. Yet this is the only class that God wishes specially to draw now, and even of those who are thus amenable to the influences of righteousness now, and somewhat drawn by it, comparatively few are so in love with truth and righteousness that they are willing to sacrifice every other interest as respects the present life, on its behalf. Yet only such are now sought by the Heavenly Father to be joint-heirs with his son.

But by and by, when under the Father's arrangement the Son shall begin his reign as King of the earth, he will exercise a drawing influence upon all, by restraining Satan from deceiving, and by opening the eyes and ears of understanding, and by causing the knowledge of the truth to fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep. Thus, although the drawing of that Millennial age will be very similar to the drawing of this present time, as to kind, it will be much more

general, reaching every class and every condition, and helping each and all, who will respond, out of degradation and ignorance and sin and death, back to full harmony with the principles of righteousness. The special drawing which the Father accomplishes is in connection with what is called "the election according to favor," while the drawing which Christ will accomplish in the next age will be the operation of *free grace*, upon all and for the benefit of all.

## DRINKING AT THE BROOK

*"He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head."*—Psalm 110:7.

Our text refers directly to our Lord Jesus, and secondly to all the members of the church, his body, each one of whom must share his experiences—walking in his steps and drinking of the same "brook," if they would in due time share with their Lord in his exaltation, to glory, honor, and immortality; this exaltation being represented in our text by the expression, "lift up the head." In ancient times as at present, human language was full of figures and symbols, water representing truth, and drinking of water representing appropriation of the truth, namely, wisdom (See Prov. 18:4); and lifting up the head, exaltation.—See Gen. 40:13.

Our text is given as the reason for the glorious blessings and honors predicted of the Christ and described in the preceding verses of the same psalm. Let us notice these. The first verse is directly applied to our Lord by the Apostles (Acts 2:34; Heb. 1:13; 1 Pet. 3:22), and our Lord applied the same to himself. (Matt. 22:44) A figure of speech is again employed, descriptive of our Lord's relationship to the Father in Glory; he is not literally seated beside him at his right hand, but he has been honored with a superior station, a position above all others—he specially is at the right hand of divine power. Nor does his second coming hinder or change this relationship; at his second coming he will still be at his Father's right hand as he himself, declared. (Matt. 26:64) At the Father's right hand during the Millennial Age, the Father, through him, shall subdue all things to himself—put down all opposing authority and insubordination; blessing those who come into heart-harmony with his kingdom of righteousness, and destroying from the earth all who after fair knowledge of good as well as evil, choose the evil. These will be considered as followers of Satan instead of followers of God and the second death, we are specifically told, is for the Devil and his messengers, servants.—Matt. 25:41.

The description of the Millennial kingdom is continued by the Prophet, who declares, "Jehovah shall send the rod of thy strength out of (or through) Zion"—primarily the Church, the "Bride," the "body" of Christ; the rod or sceptre or authority shall be exercised through the Church, by the Lord Jesus the Head of the Church, under the divine commission,—"Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." This is not in any measure fulfilled yet. Jesus when in the flesh did not rule in the midst of his enemies, and the Church has not thus ruled; on the contrary, both he and his followers have been subject to the powers that be, and the violent have taken the kingdom by force and have despitely used the Head and the body members. (Matt. 11:12) The enemies are not yet made the footstool of the Lord, Zion has not yet been glorified, and Messiah's sceptre or authority has not yet gone forth therefrom. On the contrary we are still in "this present evil world," we still wait for the completion of the elect church that together she may be glorified with her Lord—enter into his glory—when he, the due time having come, "shall take unto himself his great power and reign;"—then the nations will be angry, etc., (Rev. 11:18) and divine wrath will come upon them; and following that "day of wrath" shall come the promised blessing, upon all who shall demonstrate under the good opportunities of that Millennial kingdom, that they love righteousness and hate iniquity.

This latter class—those who during the Millennial age, during that day of his presence, shall become the Lord's people (1 Cor. 15:23)—are referred to by the Prophet when he says,—"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." The day of his power is not yet here, as the poet declares: "Wrong and evil triumph now." The "Prince of this world" still rules and is "god of this world" as the Apostle asserts; because our Lord has not yet taken to himself his great power nor begun his reign. The people who shall be willing in the day of his power are not, therefore, the saints of this Gospel age: these latter are only the "first fruits unto God of his creatures" and are willing before the day of his power—willing to hear the Shepherd's voice and to follow him; willing to sacrifice all and to lay down their lives in his service, for the brethren.

Evidently, therefore, those referred to as "Thy people"

who shall be willing in the day of Christ's power, the Millennial age, are those whom our Lord represents as his "sheep," in the parable of the sheep and the goats. They are those who after the Son of Man shall be seated on the throne of his glory, and after his church is seated with him in his throne, and after the judgment or trial day for the nations, the world, is ended,—after the knowledge of the Lord has filled the earth, after it has gradually proved the savor of life unto life, or death unto death to the world, shall be found truly "his people,"—willing, nay, glad to serve him when they know him and understand his will. As his sheep they will desire to follow in the way of righteousness, truth and holiness; as his people they will not need to be coerced further, but learning the truth in the day of his power, when the adversary is bound and when the eyes of their understandings are opened, they will be *willingly* his people. And all who shall not then become willingly his people will be esteemed his enemies, "goats," angels or messengers or servants of the adversary, and be destroyed with him in the Second Death.

"In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth." That is to say, as morning after morning comes forth fresh and vigorous as its predecessor, as the sun grows not old and feeble, so with Messiah, and so also with those accepted as the members of his body, they will have perpetually the freshness and vigor of youth,—glory, honor, immortality, the divine nature—this is part of the blessing that is promised, and which will result, our text tells us, from drinking of the brook in the way.

Having told us of the kingly power and authority of Messiah, it is appropriate that the Lord through the prophet explains to us that Messiah's priestly office is to be also of a higher type than the earthly,—that his priest and kingly offices are to be blended and united as was typified in Melchisedec, who was both king and priest. Our Lord when on earth was not of the Aaronic priesthood, nevertheless, Aaron was his type, and the sacrifices which Aaron performed were typical of the "better sacrifices" performed by the antitypical priest, in the laying down of his own life and in the consecration and sacrifice also of all those who are his during this Gospel age, who thus "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." By and by our High Priest will have completed all that was illustrated in the Aaronic type, he will have finished the Day of Atonement sacrifices, and then the glory promised will follow—instead of a suffering priesthood there will be "a royal priesthood"—a reigning priesthood.—1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 5:10.

Then follow assurances that this glorious priest-king will prosper, that his reign of righteousness will be successful; the assurance being that God will be at his right hand supporting him and bringing matters to a successful issue,—smiting down kings and wounding the heads over many countries, and subduing all things mightily. The great day of trouble coming is very generally referred to as "the day of Jehovah,"\* the day of His wrath, although it will be under the direct supervision of our Lord Jesus, for the purpose of introducing and establishing his Millennial dominion.

These, foregoing, descriptions of the greatness of Messiah and his kingdom, lead up to our text; and it, as before suggested, is given as the reason why so great blessings, honors, and dignities and authority are conferred. "He shall drink of the brook in the way; therefore shall he lift up the head—[be exalted.]"

### LEARNING OBEDIENCE BY THE THINGS SUFFERED.

As we look into the Word for testimony upon the subject, we find that our dear Master did indeed learn certain lessons of experience; as the apostle declares, he "learned obedience in the things which he suffered." Not that he had ever been disobedient to the Father's will, but that his testing at the time that he came into the world to do the Father's will was of a character and of an intensity such as never before had been brought to him nor any other creature. His obedience attested his love to the Father, attested his faith in the Father's love and justice, and in all these things he fully approved himself of the Father; he overcame every trial, he drank fre-

\* MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I, Chap. 15.

quently of the brook of wisdom, in connection with these lessons. Moreover, it was expedient that he, to be the great High Priest of mankind, should be touched with a feeling of their infirmities, and therefore that he should be tempted in all points like as his followers are tested—along the line of personality, of self will; along the line of worldly ambition; along the line of faith and trust; along all the lines of obedience to God's plan. He drank deeply of the cup, and rejoicingly said, "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?"—John 18:11.

And now we come to a point of special interest in our text; for we perceive that if it was necessary for our glorious Lord from the heavenly courts to drink of the brook of experience, and gain wisdom by the things he suffered, endured, and thereby to demonstrate his confidence in God, it is equally necessary that all the members of his body should likewise drink of the brook in the way, if they would hope to share with the Lord in the kingdom blessings—glory, honor and immortality, the divine nature.

Our dear Master's time for drinking at the brook is past, yet the lessons and encouragements therefrom are still before us in the Scripture records. It is now our time to drink of the brook of experience,—to learn the lessons that are necessary to our preparation for the kingdom. It is not enough that we have tasted of the brook of experience, that we have learned something of obedience, that we have endured some trials, that on some occasions we have learned obedience through the things we have suffered; we must continue drinking until we can gladly say—Father, thy will, not ours be done! If we drink not of the brook in the way we shall not share in the glory to follow.

Some of the Lord's people not discerning the matter in its true light, are disposed to pray that they may be spared from trials and temptations; whereas they ought to understand that the trials and difficulties of the consecrated are witnesses of the spirit \*that they are children of God, and are under his training and preparation for a glorious share in the kingdom, to which he has called us. Because if we are not tried we cannot be "overcomers"; if we do not suffer with him, and learn to endure hardness as good soldiers, and to esteem our trials and difficulties from the right standpoint, and to count it all joy when they come to us, knowing their object and knowing the Lord's sustaining grace and strength, we will not be "fit for the kingdom."

Others interpret the trials of life as evidence of divine disfavor, and fail to realize that they are designed of the Lord to shape and polish our characters and thus to work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Because of their misunderstanding they are profited little by many of life's experiences through which they are called to pass—they feel the rod, but not discerning the loving purpose behind it,

\* See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. V

## INTERESTING LETTERS FROM FRIENDS

Dear Brother Russell:—

Pray do not think that I write in a captious spirit, but the extracts from "*The Jew*," are statements so grossly overdrawn, if not absolutely and entirely untrue, that if you were to cause such accusations to be verified here before inserting them in the *Tower*, where absolute truth alone should appear, they certainly would not appear therein, except so far as true.

There is, and has been of late, a great influx of Jews (Infidels, Turks and offscouring of Europe) into England, London particularly, and it is not surprising that their ignorance of the language and generally, their clannish herding together, their filthiness and their habits and manners, as well as their injury to the employment of others, should be resented almost exclusively by a poor and uneducated people whom they displace or come into unpleasant contact with (and particularly at this time).

Precisely the same feeling is manifested toward Chinamen in San Francisco, and on the Pacific coast, etc., the difference being that in the United States there is legislation against them,—but here Jews and any nationality have absolute freedom and assured and certain protection and even-handed justice.

Such articles as that from "*The Jew*" are calculated to produce hatred, because they manifest a spirit of gross ingratitude, and wilful lying (there is no other word for it), when the Jew question is considered broadly and not from perhaps some isolated case. As to the political parties being pledged to anti-Semitism, or any other charges against them as a people, or even against their capitalists (except it may be one or two German Jew South African firms), these are on a par with the rest of it and not worthy of notice. The fact is that newly found freedom, with some, cause them, from

they fail to learn the lesson intended. Let us become more and more awake, more and more alive to the things of God,—to the facts of the case as he presents them to us in his Word—to our call to joint-heirship to the kingdom, and incidentally to the drinking of the brook of experience and wisdom in the way that will fit and prepare us for the glories to follow.

Drinking of the brook does not, however, imply that we sorrow and are disconsolate above others; on the contrary, those who drink of the brook properly are full of joy. As the apostle declares, they are enabled in every thing to give thanks unto God,—in life's difficulties, as well as in its pleasures—even as he again says, Count it all joy when ye fall into divers difficulties, knowing that under divine providence they will work out for you a greater blessing. (James 1:2) It is the world, which must also share its part of life's difficulties, that sorrows as those who have no hope, or who have false hopes. The apostle points out side by side the world's condition and the church's condition under the trials and difficulties of this present evil world, saying, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain until now, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." Then he explains the position of God's people, begotten of his spirit, who are walking in the Lord's footsteps, and drinking of the brook in the way, saying, "We ourselves also groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption, to-wit, the deliverance of the body"—the body of Christ, the church. This hope, which we have, gives a changed coloring and silver lining to every dark and troubled subject which comes to us in common with mankind; so that inspired by draughts from the brook we can sing in the house of our pilgrimage, even though as yet we must also groan, because we are in this imperfect tabernacle, this unsatisfactory mortal body.

We want to ask the Lord, our Master and Head, that he will bless us more and more, as with fresh zeal we shall endeavor faithfully and rejoicingly to drink of the brook of life's experiences, and gain wisdom therefrom that will fit and prepare us for his service by and by; and which will the better fit and prepare us for his service also in the present time, and enable us by his grace to show forth his praises in all the trying circumstances and vicissitudes of life so as to glorify him in our bodies and spirits which are his. Let us, as we drink of the brook, take a lesson from the little birds, which when drinking repeatedly lift the head as though giving thanks to God. Let us continually give thanks to our Lord for every taste of life's experience, for every lesson, for every trial—appropriating them all to our spiritual development. The time for lifting up our heads in glory is nearing, too, and already the Master directs that seeing (with the eye of faith) the evidences of their approach, we may lift up our heads and rejoice, knowing that our redemption draweth nigh.—Luke 21:28.

ignorance, to be aggressively and offensively assertive, and presume upon the liberty of action and speech, etc., according them—and so they assist largely in bringing about that of which they complain.

I write out of warmest personal regard, and respect and sincere Christian love.

I am, dear Brother, Yours truly in Christ,  
B. C. HUGHES,—*England*.

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[Nothing was farther from our intention than to intimate that the masses of the British are Jew-baiters: nor that those who do the baiting are without provocation. We merely mentioned it as "news;" and as evidence that the Jew will yet, as the Bible declares, be persecuted in every nation and thus be driven back to Palestine when Zionism shall succeed in opening that door.—Editor.]

Dear Brother Russell:—

Greetings from the Church of Los Angeles!

According to 1 Cor. 16:2, we have endeavored to follow Paul's advice, and have provided a treasury, from which is drawn, the expenses of the church, the expenses for volunteer service, also the expenses of any in need, and from this treasury we now send the *Tract Society* a little thank-offering. We, as a body, unite in the desire, to express our appreciation of the privilege of obtaining this literature for "Volunteer" work, and of the opportunity to serve it, while it is yet called day. Our earnest desire is to help the Bride to make herself ready; our earnest prayer is for the establishment of the kingdom.

We desire to thank you and the "Tower" office assistants,



for your labor of love to the church, especially for all efforts expended in our behalf. Above all we thank our Heavenly Father, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift, and we know of no better way to express our gratitude than to send to the fund the enclosed \$50.00, which has been raised for this purpose together with the surplus in our treasury.

We cannot hope to pay for the thousands of pages we have distributed; but we trust you will accept this as an expression of our gratitude.

We ask your prayers, that each of our number may be more zealous, more faithful, more fervent in spirit to serve our God and lay down our lives for the brethren, loving His approval above all else.

With Christian love and prayers for your steadfastness, we remain, your fellow-servants, in Christ.

Church of Los Angeles.

My dearly beloved Bro. Russell:—

My poor heart overflows with gratitude to our dear Lord, for the beneficial and sweet moments we have so richly enjoyed with you during this, the first Christian convention that I have ever seen in the city of Richmond. Dear brother, rest assured that your labor is not in vain here; for the 12th and 13th of October, 1901, will long be a pleasure to think of. The feast of good things continued with some of us the next day, while God's dear children before leaving the city have been telling of the joy and benefits received. No jars, no objections, no schism or worldly contention; but praise and thanks to God from every quarter,—that we attended the convention and all received such a blessing.

Truly our prayers for this season of refreshing were answered. We thought that we loved you, very dearly before, and esteemed you very highly for your works' sake; but these sessions with you have kindled our love so much, that we almost feel impatient for the beginning of eternity when in God's kingdom we part no more. O brother, the Lord knows that I feel these sentiments, and I believe that the other dear ones also do. This season with you has built us up in the most holy faith, and we pray that it may long, yea, very long last us. The dear brethren leaving for their homes were saying, "How clear this point was made; and how rich was that thought; and how long I have wanted to see dear brother Russell, the channel through which our God has sent us the blessed truth, and my longings have been realized."

We do hope, that it may meet with your approval to still further encourage us by reporting our convention in the next "Tower." With this hope, I give as nearly as I could count them, the number present, i. e., believers. I made the count one hundred and twenty-eight, possibly a few over or under. Fourteen symbolized their consecration by water baptism. Five states and District of Columbia were represented. Pray for us here, dear brother, that we may continue faithful, and let our light shine, through love and humility as well as otherwise. May our Father's richest blessings be with you to the end.

Your brother in the love and service of our dear Lord.

M. L. STAPLES,—*Virginia*.

[This report is late;—crowded out of our previous issues. Ed.]

Dear Brother Russell:—

How I long to see you. I have had a big fight and gained a glorious victory. I send you my article prepared for the Conference. I had a hard time to get a hearing, as my name was called before I reached the seat of Conference. Had I been there then I could have had the floor; but after that it was difficult. After pressing the matter they allowed me five minutes to speak and I read rapidly until I reached the sentence, "Thy kingdom come," two-thirds through, and there the Bishop called me to order. He said I had used up six minutes and I asked for an extension of time but could not get it. (They had enough.) So I asked our own City Editor if he would like to publish it and he consented.

There was a great surprise I assure you, at Syracuse Conference, when I withdrew from it and gave my reasons even partially. I commenced giving out tracts—until all were gone. When I gave one I said, "Read that carefully, when you are all alone." I have a good many old friends in the Conference and church (Nominal), but thanks be to God, I am the Lord's free man.

Some have asked me what church I am going to unite with, and my answer is the "church of the first born, whose names are written in heaven."

Yours in love, B. F. WEATHERWAX,—*New York*.

Dear Brother Russell:—

I wrote you a short time since for some samples of your publications to which you kindly replied, by forwarding me several copies of the "Watch Tower" and some tracts, all of

which I have carefully read. I am more than ever convinced of the correctness of your views of Scriptural truth. I try to make the Word of God the Counsellor and Guide of my life, and I rejoice in every development of light and truth.

Have you a church organization? If so, what is it called, and what is the form of your church government?

What is required of persons desiring to unite with the church? Have you a regular ministry? and how are they appointed and employed? An answer to the foregoing questions, and all information you may be able to furnish will be much appreciated.

That you may not be in ignorance as to whom you address, I will say, that I am a minister in the Congregational church, and if you desire can give you satisfactory references.

Since writing you, Vol I., "The Plan of the Ages," has been recovered, and though much mutilated, is still readable. I herewith enclose you 25c in stamps for which please send me Vol. II., "The Time is at Hand." The other volumes, I will order later on, or after carefully reading this.

There is great unrest and dissatisfaction among professing Christians, and it seems to me they desire, as they truly need, instruction concerning the truth as it is in Jesus. How shall this be furnished? It may be you have tracts for free distribution; if so, and you feel like entrusting me with a small supply, I will endeavor to place them where they will do the most good.

Pardon my long letter, and if you find time, amidst your arduous labors, I would be glad to receive a reply.

Yours in Christ,

L. F. WAY,—*Texas*.

[We sent the Brother a copy of "Zion's Watch Tower" containing an article on "Which is the True Church?" with our answer and hope to hear from him further, and still more enthusiastically after he has read more.—Editor.]

Dear Brother Russell:—

The brethren have done excellently in distributing the tracts sent us.

They had an amusing, though joyful experience in distributing at the last meeting of the "Christian" Church Convention. They began distributing to the few stragglers that came out before the close of the meeting. Among these was a minister who upbraided them and told them that he should warn the people against them. This he did, announcing from the pulpit that there was literature being distributed at the door that should not be read and everyone should refuse to accept it. The result was that the people crowded around the brethren with outstretched hands eager to get them. The clerical gentleman probably never served God better in his life than he did when he forbade the people reading the tracts. Everyone was surely read in search of forbidden fruit.

We have already had an illustration of the truth of your prediction in the last Tower. Last Sunday a local preacher in talking of the people who had "jumped the track" after defining Christian Science and the Dowieites said,—"There is another class of people, who claim to hear the call 'come out of her,' who separate themselves and put a weird interpretation to the Scriptures. What are these? 'Religious anarchists! nothing more, nothing less.'"

Surely this is an indication of what we may expect in the near future. May the dear Lord strengthen us that we may be prepared to stand fast in the faith when that evil day shall come.

Yours in the blessed hope,

(Mrs.) J. M. WHITE,—*Iowa*.

Dear Brother Russell:—

I want you to rest assured, dear brother, of my increasing love for you, and appreciation of your work in the Lord. As Paul was to Timothy, so, in a great measure at least, have you been to me, a father in Christ; and in the Lord's own good time and way, I hope to testify more fully to you my appreciation of all you have done and are doing. It comforts me to tell you that in every prayer—secret—I bear you to the throne of favor, realizing that as the Lord has appointed you to be so prominent a teacher, you receive a correspondingly severer trial, or testing. Thank God, we know His grace is sufficient for all your needs, and that having begun He can finish His good work in you. May your faith fail not.

I did not intend so long a letter, realizing how fully your time is occupied. Remember me in love to the household with you.

In the bonds of Christian fellowship,

W. E. PAGE,—*Wisconsin*.