

tions, and will thus be separated from their fellows. The next symbol of a whirlwind taking Elijah to heaven also implies further trouble. Prophecies are generally understood after their fulfilment—and only vaguely before. It was thus at our Lord's first advent in respect to the prophecies then being fulfilled.

We may not hope to clearly understand in advance the full import of the fiery chariot nor of the whirlwind. To

some the thought of being taken away from the present life suddenly, violently, in fiery troubles, etc., would be a terrible prospect; not so will it be with the members of the Elijah class. Waiting for their change, and living in daily readiness of heart, therefore, they go on without trepidation. On the contrary, in whatever way they shall be taken, it will be the culmination of their hopes for which they so long have waited and prayed—their deliverance.

INTERESTING LETTERS

FROM THE BATTLEFIELD OF FRANCE

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—

Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Often has it been my desire to write you of my experiences at the front, but the time has always been very limited, especially in the last weeks.

My first experience was in France, where I had copies of the French BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY sent to me. I distributed these as I had opportunity and they were received with gladness. At first the people were very much surprised that a Prussian soldier should hand them these papers, but hearing my brief explanation and after a perusal of the literature, they received it joyfully, many even offering to pay for it, which I declined.

My supply of literature having been exhausted, I was about to order more when we received instructions to break camp for transfer to the Eastern frontier—Galicia.

Sunday I was on night duty [baking dept.], therefore utilized the afternoon for a trip to the city. There I experienced much joy, for I met many Jews, to whom I could speak of their hope. I asked them if they believed all that I was telling them. "Yes," said they, "we believe it." One replied, "I thank you. We believe in a Messiah, also that the time of redemption is near at hand." Another remarked, "God will help, and it will all come about." I called on a third in his shop, where two others joined us. Much joy had come to my heart through calling on interested people, but I have never witnessed such joy as these Jews manifested. With tears in their eyes they declared, "May God grant it; may God grant it! We have already heard of it." All were rejoicing, but one who was made specially glad invited me to visit him soon again. I would have been only too glad to have done so, but on the next day our superior officer forbade us to enter the city.

A great battle is raging here; many Russians were taken prisoners. Six thousand have passed through here. Oh, what misery! One could see wounded refugees from all parts; wagons with women and children, and men driving cattle. I never saw such a sight. I am often reminded of the second Psalm. And with all these things we know it is only the beginning. Yes, thanks be unto God that these days are to be shortened! I have distributed many BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLIES amongst our troops. May the Lord add His blessing!

On our next march we passed through a battlefield. The pitiful sight reminded me of the many promises and I thanked our heavenly Father that I did not have to take an active part. What sorrow and misery sin has brought into the world, but what a blessing awaits humanity! All long for peace, and how they will rejoice when Micah 4:1-5 and Isaiah 2:4 are fulfilled! We often hear it asked, "Why is this war?"

I thank you very much for the last WATCH TOWER. The first article, "The Ministry of Angels," was a special blessing to me. The grace of our Lord be with you. Remembering you and all in fervent love before the throne of Grace, I am

Your faithful brother,

Carpathian Mts., May, 1915.

W—H—.

SOLDIERS ENTREATING FOR THE TRUTH

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—

Thank you for your letter to the brethren in the field, and for THE WATCH TOWER.

I also wish to inform you that I have repeated opportunities to discourse to my comrades. Out of 11 or 12 men there are six especially who, as often as time permits, come to me of their own accord and entreat me to give them another little discourse. When I want to close after talking two or three hours they plead, "Please continue; it is so grand." Often do I hear them say, "Why do not our preachers tell us these things? Why do they mislead us so?"

I am also frequently asked for literature. I give them THE WATCH TOWER and the sermons.

With hearty greetings, from

Your brother in Christ,

France, June, 1915.

F—K—.

A WONDERFUL DELIVERANCE

DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL:—

I wish to let you know of the great deliverance I have obtained, by God's grace, through the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION, which was shown here last fall. At that time I was a believer in Theosophy and was possessed by evil spirits, being both "clairaudient" and a "writing medium"; but, thank God, I am now free.

I thought I had the gift of the holy Spirit, but the sight of the picture of the Witch of Endor convinced me that I had a "familiar spirit," and when I prayed God to release me and make me his child again, he did so at once.

My husband went with me afterward to see the pictures, and we then obtained the six volumes of SCRIPTURE STUDIES. We are now fully consecrated and are rejoicing in the truth.

We feel we can never express our thankfulness, dear Brother, but we daily pray our heavenly Father to bless and guide you. It was such a wonderful deliverance that I can never forget the wonder of it, and my heart rises in gratitude to God, who could seek me when I had gone so far astray!

With best wishes from my husband and myself,

ELIZABETH PEARSON.—Eng.

E. S. M. IN A LETTER-BOX DID IT

DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL:—

As I am changing my place of residence and should be sorry to miss a copy of THE WATCH TOWER, I am enclosing my new address. A few months ago I was so fortunate as to find one of your papers in my letter-box, and I thank God I was interested enough to read it.

In view of the many creeds I had often asked myself, Which is the truth? Surely they cannot all be right! I thank God today that I am enjoying your STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES and THE TOWER. They seem more reasonable than anything I have seen. I have said to myself, At last I have found the truth, and I have not changed my mind.

E. COLBY HARRIMAN.—Mass.

"AS DECEIVERS AND YET TRUE"

"Giving no offense in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed; . . . by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true."—2 Corinthians 6:3, 8.

How varied are the experiences of an active Christian—experiences of honor and of dishonor, of being well reported and evil reported, of suffering for righteousness' sake, of being called deceivers, etc.! Some may have a greater amount of publicity than do others and thus attract more attention. Some may have a wider field of service and greater opportunities than do others. But every faithful disciple of Christ will have more or less of these experiences enumerated in our text and in its context. Some will speak well of us and others will speak ill. Throughout the entire Gospel age it has ever been true that "all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Timothy 3:12) Especially has this been true of these last days.

Amongst the brethren of Christ all of the Lord's saints should have honor. While none should seek for honor of the brethren, nevertheless a great deal of esteem should attach to every one who has taken the great step of full consecration to God—no matter how ignoble the person may be according to the flesh. The fact that God has begotten any one of his holy Spirit should make us wish to respect those whom the Lord has thus honored. Each of the saints, however humble, is greatly loved of our Lord Jesus; and therefore all of the children of God should take heed how they treat even the least of his little ones—their brethren.

"As deceivers, and yet true." On many occasions the great Apostle Paul was dishonored; at other times he was honored.

He had evil reports spread abroad concerning him, as well as good reports. He was considered a deceiver by many who professed to be the people of God. Yet all the while he was true to the Lord and to his people. He was considered a renegade Jew, because he was not teaching obedience to the Law Covenant as the only hope of everlasting life. He was teaching what was far superior—salvation through faith in the merit of the sacrifice of Christ; and this doctrine made the Law look inferior. Therefore his fellow Jews accused him of being unfaithful to the law of their fathers. To a Jew this was considered a great dishonor.

As a result, very evil reports of St. Paul went broadcast among the unbelieving Jews everywhere. He was branded as one of the greatest deceivers ever known. Everybody was warned against him—"Watch out for that man Paul; he is coming! Whoever will kill that fellow will do God a service and glorify his name!" "Why?" might be asked by some. "Because he is deceiving the people by telling them that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah—telling them that when they die to the Law they become alive through this man Jesus—telling them that the Law which we have had for sixteen hundred years is of no account! He is trying to draw people after that Nazarene!"

Then St. Paul was also accused of trying to draw followers after himself. Yet he was true to God in every sense of the word. He was true to the nation of Israel, to the law, and to the prophets. He was true to God and to the Lord Jesus Christ. He was no deceiver in any sense; he was merely called a deceiver by those who were blinded by the god of this world. He seemed "as a deceiver" to his blinded Jewish brethren and to those who served false gods.

CONCESSIONS FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS

The Apostle's earnest desire and endeavor was to give "no offense in anything, that the ministry be not blamed." The word ministry is frequently used today in reference to the

clergy as a whole. The ministers, or preachers, of the churches are spoken of as the ministry; such as the Presbyterian ministry, the Methodist ministry, etc. But we think St. Paul had a broader thought; namely, that of proclaiming the true Gospel of Christ or of serving the Lord in whatever manner. He used the word in the sense of service. A minister is a servant. All who serve the Lord, whether publicly or privately, are ministers, and should endeavor to live so true a life, so honorable a life, that even though they may be called deceivers, nevertheless others will take note of their exemplary walk. Each should try to live in so inoffensive a manner that the world will call it good, proper living. Live above reproach. Give no just cause for offense. This is the Apostle's thought, that we should not give any one just reason to be offended at us.

Among the Jews, for any one to eat pork would be an offense. He would be looked down upon and not considered properly religious. In our day, the eating of pork is not condemned by many. But failure to observe Sunday as the Sabbath would be considered a violation of a divine command. We might, so far as our own consciences are concerned, do certain things; yet the ministry, the service of the truth, might be blamed for our so doing. Many are very scrupulous as to Sunday observance as the Sabbath. So, as the Apostle enjoins, we should, as children of God, be so careful in our conduct as to go to the extreme of faithfulness, wherever possible. The conscientious scruples of an individual are not to be treated lightly.

In some parts of the world it is the custom to remove the shoes before entering the house. If we were in such a locality we should conform ourselves to the general custom. We should ever be willing to adapt ourselves to the custom of those around us where we can do so without violating our conscience, if by conforming to their ways we would avoid offense or increase our influence for good. To fail to do this would be a lack of love and consideration, and hence in some manner, an injury to the Lord's cause.

JUSTIFICATION—RECKONED AND ACTUAL

To get the right focus upon the word "justification," our minds should go back to ascertain what is the difficulty with man, and why there is any need of justification by faith or any other way. We find that the necessity for justification before any man could be in accord with God lies in the fact that man had become a sinner, and that a death sentence had been pronounced upon him by God, the great Judge of the universe. Before his fall, Adam was called the son of God; but no man since Adam had been called by that name, until Jesus came. Jesus was called the Son of God because he was so born, and because he was such in his pre-human condition, before he came into the world.

Adam and his children were condemned to death because they were unworthy of life, under the sentence, "Dying, thou shalt die." Not only so, but sickness and mental imperfection accompanied the fulfilment of the sentence. A further part of the sentence was separation from God, alienation from God. In order for man to come back into God's favor and blessing, a sacrifice for sins was required. Until that sacrifice would be made there could be no justification, in the full sense.

The Apostle Paul pointed out that under the terms of the Mosaic Law given to Israel, the people were promised harmony with God, forgiveness of past sins, justification, if they would keep the Law. But after trying for fifteen hundred years and more, they found that they were unable to keep it; "for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" in God's sight. (Gal. 2:16) But meantime, while none were justified under the Law, because unable to keep that Law, there were some who commended themselves to God by the manifestation of a proper spirit, a spirit of faith and obedience. These we speak of as belonging to the ancient worthy class. This class includes Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Job, Moses and all the prophets, besides others not so notable. See Hebrews 11.

But the justification which came to the ancient worthies was not a justification to life. No real justification to life could come until the Redeemer had laid down the Redemption-price for sin—until Christ had died, "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." (1 Peter 3:18) Since Christ died for this purpose, it follows that none were brought to God until after Christ had died; for if, according to God's arrangement of "like for like," it had been possible to justify mankind by any other means, then Christ had not died. If these ancient worthies could have been justified to life by some other method, so could other people have been; and the death of Christ would not have been necessary.

JUSTIFICATION TO LIFE

What then was the particular difference between the relationship to God which was granted Abraham and all the other

worthies of olden time and that which comes to us who in this age exercise faith? For the word "justification" is used of both classes; Abraham was justified by faith, and so are we—"Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." But Abraham and others of previous ages, could not in a legal sense, have peace with God; for Christ had not yet come to earth and died for the sins of the world. And so the record is that Abraham was justified to friendship with God. Friendship with the Creator was one of the things which were lost when Adam sinned. Therefore man was a stranger to God, an "alien through wicked works." But God counted Abraham as his friend.

Abraham's faith was manifested by his works. His was not an empty profession of loyalty to God; he demonstrated his faith in a practical way—by his works of obedience. After his faith had been tested, he received certain promises from God. He was no longer dealt with as an enemy. But being justified to friendship with God is a different thing from being justified to life. If Abraham had been justified to life, without Christ, then neither he nor the remainder of the world would have needed a Savior at all. All could have been alike justified.

But the Scriptures assure us that there is no other name given under heaven by which we must be saved except the name of Jesus. Therefore if we cannot be saved except through faith in Jesus' name and in his blood, by being brought into relationship with God through him, neither could Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, the prophets and other worthies have been otherwise justified. As they could not exercise faith in a Savior who had not yet come, and whose work had not been accomplished, it follows that they were never legally justified; i. e., justified to life. However, their obedience to God was tested and demonstrated, and they were treated as God's friends and made acquainted to some extent with certain features of the divine program. God said that he would not hide these things from Abraham, because he was his friend.

But there has been a curse resting upon the human race ever since the fall of Adam. There could not be a blessing of God and a curse of God upon the world at the same time; and the blessing has not yet come. Only those who are in Christ Jesus have as yet come legally from under this curse. These alone have been justified to life. Abraham was informed by the Lord that this blessing would come to mankind through his posterity, because of his great faith and implicit obedience. But Abraham was never invited to present his body a living sacrifice, as believers of this Gospel age have been invited to do. There was none prior to Jesus' time, manifestly, who could have been granted the opportunity to "follow in his steps."—1 Peter 2:21.

Jesus referred to this when he said, "there hath not arisen a greater Prophet than John the Baptist; nevertheless, I say unto you that the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."—Luke 7:28.

GOD'S SERVANTS AND HIS SONS

If all in the kingdom of heaven are greater than John the Baptist, they are greater also than Enoch, Abraham, etc. Why is this? The answer is that it is not that the followers of Jesus are more worthy than John the Baptist or these others, but that the opportunity of becoming members of the house of sons has been granted only since Pentecost, and is granted to those alone who take up their cross and follow Jesus. Since he was a fore-runner of this class, none could precede him. Those who may become sons are pointed out in the Gospel of St. John: "To as many as received him [Jesus], to them gave he power [liberty, privilege] to become sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, who are begotten, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." This class are the favored ones, they have lived in the appointed time, "The acceptable time"; and the message of the Gospel has gone to these.

The Gospel did not go to Abraham in the same sense, although St. Paul says that the Gospel was preached beforehand to Abraham. We see that God first proclaimed his purpose to him. But that feature of the Gospel which is preeminently the preferential feature, Abraham did not know; for the sacrifice for sin had not yet been given. God could not justify any to life and make of them sons until after Jesus had come and prepared the way. The privilege of becoming sons of God was, then, given first in Jesus' day, to those who received him. All who had previously exercised faith were friends or servants. Israel was called a "house of servants." "Moses verily was faithful as a servant over his house, but Christ as a son over his own house, whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the reposing of the hope firm unto the end."—Heb. 3:1-6.

So we see the contrast between the house of servants and the house of sons, and the reason why. We are not to think of the church as being better intentioned or as being less sinful by nature than were Abraham, Isaac, Moses and the prophets; but this opportunity of sonship has come to us, and it did not come to the others, because their day was not God's "due time." It is for us, then, to avail ourselves of the great opportunity of entering the house of sons and thus become heirs of God.

JUSTIFICATION TO LIFE FOLLOWS CONSECRATION

So, then, the church were justified to life, through the merit of Christ's sacrifice. Hence they had something which God could accept. And day by day they offer themselves to God. Abraham had no merit by which he could be an acceptable offering to God; for, being a member of the fallen Adamic race, he was a sinner, and the divine arrangement was that nothing blemished could come to God's altar. But now since Christ has died, has risen again, has ascended up on high, has entered into the presence of God and made satisfaction for the church, he imputes his righteousness to us at our consecration, and our justification is made complete—we are freely justified from all things—made alive from the dead. It is ours then to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, and receive the begetting to the new nature—the divine.

Not having this full justification, neither Abraham nor any one else, up to the time of our Lord, could present his body to God as a sacrifice. So we find no preaching of this message prior to Jesus' day. We read that Christ "brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." These were not brought to light before he came. The way to life had not been opened up. To Abraham there was a dim, shadowy promise that there would some time be a blessing for all mankind; but neither life everlasting nor immortality, the highest form of life, was made clear to him. He knew simply that a blessing was coming; and he had the faith to seek to walk in harmony with God.

Seeing how wonderful are the opportunities afforded the Gospel church, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?" (Hebrews 2:3) Here the Apostle is distinctly declaring where this "great salvation" began to be proclaimed. It was never made clear before. The Apostles of our Lord could proclaim a salvation from death, a salvation unto life, then offered; but those who lived prior to their time could not have proclaimed it. Jesus was the first who brought the message of salvation to us, and his words on the subject were corroborated by his apostles, who heard him.

Justification to life follows, never precedes, consecration. Consecration is the devotion of one's being to the Lord, the surrender of one's will and all to God. In connection with the

church, it signifies not only the giving of one's self to God, but also his acceptance of the one thus offering himself. As it is written, "Sanctify [consecrate] yourselves, and I will sanctify [consecrate] you." During the Gospel age it has been our privilege to offer ourselves to God through Christ, who, as the great High Priest, accepts these offerings until the predestinated number is complete. Whoever is thus justified and accepted by him is acceptable to the Father; and to such a one comes the holy Spirit of the Father, begetting him to the divine nature.

During the three and a half years of our Lord's ministry, he declared to his disciples that if they would abide in him, the blessing of life should be their portion. But they had no legal standing before the Father until first Jesus had finished his sacrifice, had been raised from the dead and had ascended up to heaven, there to appear in the presence of the Father for them. Then they received the holy Spirit in begetting power, with outward demonstration. This came to them at Pentecost. They had consecrated themselves before, and Jesus had accepted them. Everything was done that could be done at that time; but everything was not up to the standard required after Jesus had appeared before God and made satisfaction for those who were to constitute his church. At Pentecost, and not until then, they were anointed of the Spirit and recognized as sons of God. This was the completion of their consecration—its result.

THE PRESENT OBJECT OF CONSECRATION

So the Scriptures inform us that God is pleased to accept in the same way all who come unto him through Christ, until the time when the last member of the foreordained number of the elect has been chosen. After that the door will be shut—not the door of mercy, but the door to the high calling to joint-heirship with Christ, offered only during the Gospel age. This is what consecration is for during the Gospel dispensation. The Father has ordained that before he will impute the merit of Christ to us, we must do our part by the dedication of ourselves to God. Only those who do this will be justified to life through Christ's imputed merit.

"If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." This is the condition. In no other way will Jesus become our Advocate. "We [the Spirit-begotten] have an Advocate with the Father." He is not the world's Advocate in any sense. He is our Advocate, the Advocate of all who come unto the Father by him. The great divine court may not be approached except by those who are authorized.

Jesus became the great High Priest by the offering up of himself. And having become the great High Priest over the house of God, he is the Advocate of all those who come into harmony with the Father. He is their Surety. As such, he has a right to make his own terms; and the terms that he has made are that he will accept as disciples only those who renounce self, and take up their cross and follow him.

We see the great mass of professed Christian people—four hundred millions of them—some of them in jail, some of them in the army, on one side or the other. The most of them are striving for wealth or for the pleasures of sense. Few are justified to life. Some may be justified partially as was Abraham. In proportion as any are trying to do right, they are justified. But in order to have life, it is necessary to have this full justification, which can come to us only after we have made a complete consecration to the Lord.—Romans 12:1.

ALL THE WORLD ARE YET HEATHEN

The heathen were not justified in Abraham's day, nor in Jesus' day; in fact, the heathen are not justified yet; and all the world are heathen, except those who have come into covenant relationship with God. The Israelites spoke of the remainder of the world sometimes as heathen, sometimes as Gentiles, sometimes as people—three different terms meaning all who were not children of Israel.

Since Christ has come among us and inaugurated the way to life through his blood, we are privileged to enter into a special covenant with God. The New Covenant is reserved for Israel and the world by and by. The special covenant which God has for the church is shown in his command, "Gather my saints together unto me, those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." (Psalm 50:5) Only by sacrifice—only by giving up our will, our all—can we come into this covenant, and none can come except through the great Advocate. It is a Covenant of Sacrifice. The heathen, the world, have entered into no such Covenant of Sacrifice; therefore they cannot come into the position of sons of God. None can enter into this position without a definite knowledge of its terms and conditions.

When the Jewish Epoch had terminated and the Gospel call was extended to the Gentiles, Cornelius the Roman cen-

turion was the first to enter. We read that before Cornelius had received his call he was a just man, who feared God, who prayed always, and who gave much alms to the people. We would say that he was a very fine character. But he was a Gentile, and so had not been able to come in under the call. But now the time had come for the Gospel message to go to the Gentiles. Did the Father receive Cornelius at once? No. The Lord sent an angel to him, who said, "Thy prayers and alms have come up before Jehovah." They had been noted before, but God could not receive them until now.

And did this message to Cornelius bring him into covenant relationship with God? Oh, no! The angel of the Lord merely directed him what to do. He said, "Send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter. He lodges with one Simon, a tanner. He shall tell thee words to the saving of thyself and thy house." These words were necessary; the knowledge was indispensable. There can be no justification in ignorance. Such is not God's plan. Cornelius and his family were ready; for he had previously been a consecrated man to the best of his knowledge. St. Peter would not have known how to deal with the Gentiles; therefore God gave him a vision, a special manifestation of his will.

The case of Cornelius gives us the clue to the fact that God does not justify any Gentiles except those who come into Covenant relationship with him, and that there is no way of coming into such relationship except that way which he has appointed. The one special way for the Jew was through Moses and the Law Covenant, and thence into Christ. The method by which the Gentile may come into covenant relationship with God is by being engrafted into the "good olive tree," whose root is the Abrahamic Covenant. (Romans 11:16-22) Whoever would belong to Christ must become an Israelite, a member of the true seed of Abraham. This we do by faith in Christ, the seed, and baptism into his death. Hence we are no longer of the world. The whole world are heathen; for they are not in covenant relationship with God. They are Gentiles; and Gentiles are heathen, from the standpoint of the Scriptures.

"THE SAINTS SHALL JUDGE THE WORLD"

All the families of the earth shall yet be blessed and enlightened, through Abraham's seed, which seed is Christ. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." We have not yet blessed the world; we have not yet judged the world; for we are not yet instructed to do so. But the Apostle Paul said, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" (1 Corinthians 6:2, 3) It is not while we are in the flesh, but after our glorification in the first resurrection, that we are to be judges.

So, then, God has appointed a great Day of Judgment for the world (Acts 17:31; Psalm 96:9-13; 98:1-9; Acts 15:13-18); and the saints are to be the judges with Christ. The world are still condemned in Adam. They are yet to have justification—"whosoever will"—and the ground-work of that justification is to be laid, first of all, in that New Covenant which Christ will make with Israel as the result of his sacrifice on Calvary. It will be exactly like the old Law Covenant, except that it will have a better Mediator—The Christ, Head and body. As the old Law Covenant was established on the basis of the typical sacrifices, so the New Covenant is to be established on the basis of the "better sacrifices." The work of the Gospel age has been the offering of the better sacrifices than bulls and goats—Jesus, the Head, and the church, his body members, associated with him as parts of these "better sacrifices." He will have completed all the sacrificing when the last member of his body shall have passed "within the veil." Then the opportunity to follow in Jesus' steps will no longer be given; for there is only a definite number to become the Priesthood. These will have part in his resurrection, the chief

resurrection. Speaking of these the Apostle says, "We must all be changed"; for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Corinthians 15:50-54) When this class shall have inherited the kingdom, they will be prepared to do the work of judging the world.

THE WORK OF THE NEXT AGE

Immediately after satisfaction is made to justice for the sins of the world, all mankind will be turned over to the one who bought them. Then justice will have no more to do with them; for they will be in the hands of Christ. He will then be the Life-giver, the Judge, the King. During his Millennial reign his work will be the awakening and the uplifting of all for whom he died. The opportunity will be given to all to come into harmony with the Lord, of devoting themselves to his service. The reward for their so doing will be everlasting life and full perfection of being on the human plane. Those who thus devote themselves will rise out of degradation to full perfection. Their perfecting will be their justification; for this means to be made right.

The difference between the justification to which the world will attain and that of the church now, is that with the church it is a justification by faith, a reckoned justification, attained instantly, by the imputation of the merit of Christ; while the justification of the world will be by works—it will be a making right actually, and actual perfection. But there will be no justification without faith and heart loyalty, either now or then. Under the Lord's present arrangement also it is important that there shall be perfect works. The new creature is actually just, perfect; and the Father imputes to our imperfect bodies the merit of Jesus and counts us dead according to the imperfect flesh. Thus our imperfect works are counted, through Christ, as perfect. The perfect new creature, from its small beginning, is gradually to grow and develop to maturity, using the fleshly body as its servant.

With the world it will be different. Theirs will be a work of gradually coming to a condition of justification, of perfection of mind and body, under the cover of the New Covenant, sealed with the blood of Christ. They will be coming nearer to this perfection day by day and year by year, rising toward perfection. When they shall have reached that pinnacle they will be fully justified, or fully made just; and if they pass faithfully their final test, after the close of the Millennial age, the reward of everlasting life will be given them. But the dead of the world will not live, from God's standpoint, until the close of that age, when Christ shall have finished his Mediatorial work. Meantime, those who will not come into accord with God's arrangement will die the second death; they will be destroyed as "natural brute beasts."—2 Peter 2:12.

The second death is like the first death, only that it will be instantaneous; it will not be for the father's sin, but for the individual's own sin; and it will be eternal. There will be no redemption from it, as from the first death. "Christ dieth no more." The reward of the righteous will be everlasting life; none will be granted it until they have been fully tested and proven. Therefore God can guarantee that thenceforth there will be no more crying or sighing or dying forever; for all will be fully in accord with him.

We believe that the time for the world's trial will soon come; but we do not think that the door of the kingdom is yet closed. Of course we have no special information on the subject; for the Lord does not say that the door to the high calling will close as soon as the times of the Gentiles are ended. The door will be closed when the last member of the body of Christ shall have been gathered, shall have been found faithful, shall have finished his course and passed beyond the veil. "Those who were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut." It will be closed then; for none thereafter can be added to that elect number. We believe that this time is not far distant.

THE TWO GREAT INTERCESSIONS

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."—Hebrews 7:25.

St. Paul is here contrasting the great Priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ with that of the Aaronic law. He is pointing out to the believing Hebrews the difference between these two priesthoods; for the Jews had difficulty in understanding how there could be a change of priesthood. Their priesthood had stood for sixteen hundred years. It seemed neither right nor reasonable that any should say that God's institution of the law arrangement was not designed to be lasting. It was necessary, therefore, that St. Peter should deal with the matter extensively. Throughout the entire book of Hebrews he is seeking to point out that the Aaronic priesthood was merely

typical, merely a one-sided priesthood. The great antitypical priest was to be not only a sacrificing, but also a reigning priest. He was to have a great work beyond the time of sacrificing. He was the antitype of Aaron, but his priesthood was of an order entirely different—much superior in every way.

This great priest, when enthroned in glory, was designed to be after the order of Melchizedek. He was not to be after the order of Aaron. The Apostle pointed out that of this glorious priest it was prophesied (Psalm 110:4), "Jehovah hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek"—a priest upon his throne.

Those various sacrifices which the Aaronic order offered year by year were only types of the "better sacrifices." (Hebrews 9:23) The typical priest offered first for his own sins, then for the sins of all the people. (Leviticus 9:7, 8, 15; 16:11, 14, 15) So the great antitypical priest offers first a sacrifice for himself (the members of his body), then for the sins of the whole world. The blood which was offered in the typical sacrifices was the blood of bulls and goats; the blood of "better sacrifices" is the blood of The Christ, Head and body, which has been in process of shedding all down through the Gospel age. But it is the merit of the blood of Jesus, the Head of the body, which gives virtue to the sacrifices of the body.

"ABLE TO SAVE TO THE UTMOST"

The Apostle shows that the sacrifices of the typical priests were efficacious for only a year; that they needed to be offered every year; and that the priests of the Aaronic order were not suffered to continue in their office, by reason of their death. But the great antitypical Priest is to continue always. He will never have a successor; for he "ever liveth." He is to accomplish all his great work and then sit down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. He will never again need to sacrifice, to die for sin; for he will have done this effectually, once for all.

Furthermore, the Apostle, in considering the work accomplished by this great priest for all the people, shows how much more efficient his work is than that of the earthly priest. The priests of the Aaronic order, the Levitical priesthood, could not properly sympathize with the people, nor were their sacrifices able to really take away sin. (Hebrews 2:17, 18; 4:15; 10:4) But this great antitypical priest, whose priesthood is continual, is not only able to take away sin, but is able to sympathize fully with those for whom his "better sacrifices" have been made. "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." He is able to save fully, completely, eternally.

This text may be understood to apply to the church now, that the Lord not only saves us from the sins that are past—when first we accepted Christ, had our sins forgiven and were accepted by him—but throughout our course he also covers with the robe of his merit those blemishes and weaknesses which result from the imperfection of our human body. Whatever could be shown to be unintentional would be canceled by the merit of his sacrifice, stripes being administered for the expiation of any measure of wilfulness. So he is able to save, not only from sins past and present, but from sins future—save to the uttermost,

and bring us to the divine favor which God has promised to the faithful footstep followers of Jesus.

INTERCESSION FOR THE WORLD OF MANKIND

But this work for the church is not all that was meant, we think, by the Apostle. If the intercession of Jesus, the great High Priest, were all in the past, and if only the church of the first-born were to be benefited by this intercession, all the remainder of the world would be left out. We are not to think of Jesus as interceding for his people over and over every day; but there are two general intercessions. The first he made when he presented the merit of his sacrifice in the Most Holy (heaven itself) for this who would become his during the Gospel age, and its effects have been applicable throughout the entire age. All who become of the church class come in under the efficacy of this intercession which was provided for at the beginning of the age. His merit ever avails for them before the Father. He ever lives as our great Advocate, because of the work done for us when atonement was made in the presence of God.—Hebrews 9:24.

But Jesus is to make another intercession. This is pointed out in the 2d Psalm: "Ask of me [Jehovah], and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Jesus is to intercede for the heathen, the Gentiles, all who are not now members of the household of faith. See also Romans 11:17-24.

The same merit which has all through the present age been efficacious for the church class is to be efficacious for the whole world, those in their graves as well as those now having a measure of life. It will be a final or complete intercession, an intercession to the uttermost. It will not leave out even one human being.

During the Millennium our Lord Jesus will not be making intercession for the world; for he will do this at its beginning, when he applies his merit for "all the people," when the New Covenant is sealed. The Father will have no direct dealings with mankind until the close of the thousand years, but will deal with them only through the Son. During the Messianic reign, Christ and the church will do a restitution work for all mankind. Because of the presentation of our Lord's merit on their behalf, the whole world will be in Christ's hands to be dealt with to a completion, to the uttermost, to leave nothing undone that can be done. At the close of that age, all the incorrigible will have been destroyed, and those brought to perfection will be turned over to the father for a thorough testing. All who then fail, who prove not to be fully loyal at heart, will likewise be destroyed, "cut off from amongst the people."

OVERCOMING DESIRES FOR EARTHLY THINGS

"But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."—1 Cor. 9:27.

The Apostle Paul is here using the illustration of a race-course. In certain races there are what are called handicaps; that is, one who is weaker is given a certain allowance of time in starting, and is granted a victory if he gets in on time. That would be an accommodation for only a few. It is called a handicap from the standpoint of the others. But in the Christian race there is accommodation granted to all; for there is none perfect—all come short of the glory of God, and we could never gain any reward that God has offered, had it not been for the satisfaction which the Redeemer has made.

Yet it is also true in this race that some have more allowance than others. Those who have many weaknesses have a corresponding allowance of grace made for them; and those who have fewer weaknesses have a less allowance. "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly," said St. Paul. He was fully determined. He had a definite goal in view, and meant to win. This is the only attitude, if we would gain the prize that God has offered us; and the whole matter is dependent upon our zeal, our faithfulness and our earnestness.

The Greek games had other exhibitions of strength and agility besides racing. There were contests with wild animals, in which a man would attempt to slay an animal. Then there were others between men, in which a man would attempt to deal his antagonist a fatal blow, if possible, with his brass knuckles. In preparation for this contest, the contestants had a wind bag to practise on. But this was not the real battle, it was merely the preparation.

So the Apostle says that he was not using his strength merely in practise. He was trying to do something. He was fighting a real battle. What battle was it? The answer of the Bible is that a great battle began away back in the days when Satan became the adversary of God. Our first parents came into slavery to Satan, and later some of the angels fell. Now

many are fighting, and some are thoroughly ignorant of whose side they are fighting for. Those who are fighting for unrighteousness are on Satan's side. Whoever is fighting for moral reforms, etc., is on God's side, rather than the side of the enemy of mankind.

The world are fighting more or less—some more intelligently, some less intelligently. There are in every army some who could not tell you what the fight is about. So now, many do not know that a battle is being waged between Righteousness and Sin. The millionaires have their own battles and contentions; and the little store-keepers have their battles, in competition with the larger merchants. The attorney has his battles. He may sometimes take a case that is on the side of justice, and defend it with zeal; and again he may take a case that is on the side of injustice, and prosecute it with equal zeal. But the world do not recognize the real battle. The same man may be on the right side one day, and on the wrong side the next day.

The Apostle had enlisted under the true banner. Christ lifted up a standard in opposition to Satan, and he will yet win a glorious victory on the very field where sin has reigned for six thousand years. He had a personal conflict with the powers of darkness, in which he was victor. And his victory was gained by his overcoming his own natural desires, and fully submitting himself to the will of God. This was the only condition on which he could be exalted from the earthly state, to the glories of the divine nature. He has met the required condition, of dying the Just for the unjust, and has gotten the great victory over Satan.

The heavenly Father, in harmony with his own arrangement, has empowered the Lord Jesus to take out from the world a company to lay down their lives with himself, during a time when everything seems contrary, when evil seems to triumph

more frequently than do righteousness and justice. These, walking by faith, and not by sight, are to lay down their lives for the sake of righteousness, to carry out the purposes of God.

OUR PRIMARY BATTLE IS WITH SELF

Do we ask, Whom, or what, shall we fight? The answer is that one would not enter the real conflict at all, if he should follow the impulses of his own mind. In such case he would not have any part in this fight. He might engage in the ordinary battling of the world—sometimes in the right, sometimes in the wrong. But if he would get into this company which is being guided by Jesus, he must come unto God by him, and must sacrifice earthly hopes, aims, and ambitions, and walk in Jesus' footsteps—steps of suffering unto death. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." (Heb. 2:10) Thus the battle begins in our mind, our will. We submit our mind to the mind of Christ.

In the typical Day of Atonement sacrifices, the body of Christ is represented by the Lord's goat. And as the high priest killed the goat in the type, so in the antitype the animal nature is to be killed, slaughtered, sacrificed. It is not to be yielded up to sin, but to be overcome. The new creature is in mortal combat with entrenched sin, and the cravings of human nature. He has made a consecration of himself to God. As a result, the Advocate has placed his own merit upon the consecrated one. When this is done, the battle immediately begins, that the new creature may keep down the old creature, the old will.—Galatians 5:17.

The Apostle says, "I keep my body under, . . . lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway." It must be a real battle, a real conflict; for the victory is only to those who overcome. "To him that overcometh . . . will I give power over the nations"; "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne."—Rev. 2:26, 27; 3:21.

This battle, then, that begins at the time of our consecration, continues until the end—our death. It will be the death

either of the new creature or of the old creature. So far as our earthly interests are concerned, we sacrifice them fully—we exchange them for the opportunity of gaining glory, honor, immortality, joint-heirship with the Lord, participation in the divine nature. So, as the Apostle suggests, we are not to be expending our strength merely on a bag of wind, but we are to fight to some purpose.

"For me to live is Christ," says the Apostle; and for me to lose in this battle is for me to perish as a new creature, and this means that the second death would be mine. We should realize that in our position as Christians our eternal interests are at stake. We fear of losing the eternal life, which we should surely lose if we fail to be overcomers.

The Apostle Peter writes, "Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness; . . . that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless!" (2 Peter 3:11, 14) With this anticipation, how serious life should be!

The Christian who knows about these things of the future, and who lives in anticipation of them, has a joy and a peace of which the world knows nothing. One week of such living is worth more than an entire lifetime with only such things as the world has to offer. And if now we enjoy living the new life, and entering by faith into the things that the Lord has in reservation for us, what will be the realization! If we would lose much in the present time by losing our hope and faith, what would it be to lose these things eternally!

As we realize this, we see that we cannot afford one moment of carelessness. The man engaged in combat with the animal knows that the bruised and wounded animal seeks to kill him. So the Apostle tells us, the old nature strives to kill the new nature. Therefore the new nature must see to it that it uses all its strength to gain the victory. The Lord has promised us grace sufficient for every time of need. If we are overcome by the old nature, it will be because we have not strength sufficient for the victory; for if we call upon the Lord he will sustain us. But the Lord will test our loyalty, our faith, our strength of character, our alertness of mind. And the victory is sure, so long as our trust is in him!

THE CHRIST PERFECTED BY SUFFERING

"Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are made partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."—1 Pet. 4:13.

It might at first seem strange to God's people that they should suffer special trials and difficulties as a result of becoming children of God and doers of that which is good. The natural expectation would be that he who sins shall suffer, and he who seeks to avoid sin shall be blessed. This is a natural law, and it will operate in due time—during the Millennial reign of our Lord. Evil-doers shall suffer stripes, and if found persistent, shall be cut off in the second death. But all well-doers shall be rewarded with everlasting life and blessing forever.

This is not true now, however, for the reign of the Prince of Righteousness has not yet begun. We are under the reign of the prince of darkness. And the evil-doers often have great success, while the right-doers suffer. David says of the wicked, "Their eyes stand out with fatness; they have more than heart could wish." (Psa. 73:7) Nevertheless he took his stand with those who would please God—and so also do we.

GOD'S PURPOSE IN TESTING US

St. Paul, speaking concerning the church of the Gospel age, says, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3:12) There is no exception to this rule; and the knowledge and expectation of this should make us stand fast, having on the breastplate of righteousness, and having our feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace.

God allows his people to have these experiences and to suffer for right-doing. In the present time he is calling out a saintly company. This company will be the royal priesthood of the future, to bless all the world during Messiah's reign. And the Bible explains to us that these need trials to prove and test their characters.

God wishes to see how loyal we are to the principles of righteousness. How much are we willing to suffer? It is a saying with the world, "Every man has his price." And so in the church there are some who would endure a certain amount and then back down. Others will endure a little more, and others still a little more. The Lord declares that he is seeking those who will give up everything in order to prove faithful to their covenant with him. This faithfulness means entire loyalty to God, to his laws, which are the laws of righteousness.

THE FIRE TO BURN AMONGST YOU

The intimation that these fiery trials will try the church, will burn amongst God's people, does not necessarily mean

that all the fiery trials will come from the church; but that these trials constitute a fire that is to do a purifying work amongst them, burning in their midst. It is an experience that must be endured by each one individually. It will be a general experience, because each one must have a share in this matter. It is not merely that the company as a whole will have opposition against them, but that each individual will be personally exposed to the fiery trials. Therefore this fire burns in our midst and will burn to the end.

It is a different kind of trial from what could come to any other body of people. The explanation of this difference is in our text—"inasmuch as we are made partakers of Christ's sufferings." When we know that each member of the body of Christ must be tried, we can rejoice when some of this fire touches us. We say, "I am having a share in the sufferings of Christ. I am glad that in God's providence I have a share in these trials; for if I had no share in them, how could I know that I am one of the body members?"

THE PRIMARY SOURCE OF TROUBLE

So we all rejoice, knowing that these fiery trials are of the Lord. Not that the Lord is the cause of these fiery trials; for usually it is the adversary. But we have put ourselves into the Lord's hands, and he has promised to supervise all that concerns us. Therefore, whatever comes to us, we may be sure that it is of the Father's purpose, or permission for our good. If, therefore, we recognize that this is something that the Lord's providence has arranged for us, it is all right, no matter how frequently we have to go to the throne of grace for help in time of need.

God has revealed to us that he purposes to give to The Christ very great exaltation, great glory, honor and immortality. Therefore we are looking forward to the time when this body shall be perfected, and we shall share in the glory of our Head. When the glory shall be revealed, we shall be glad with a great joy! These trials that come to us are from a variety of sources. In our context they are spoken of as the one trial of the church, but that one trial is made up of a variety of experiences. If these difficulties and trials came all at once, they might be too severe for us. Therefore the Lord permits us to be taken out of the fire for a little while. "He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust."—Psa. 103:14.

TORTURES OF TODAY MORE REFINED

And so the Father has arranged that we shall have little seasons of refreshment between times, so that when the next trying experience comes, it will find us a little stronger and more ready to profit by it. Some of these trials come from the adversary himself. Apparently the things that have been done to the church could come from none other. Think of the devilish disposition manifested toward our Lord, and reflect upon his sufferings. We cannot think that mankind under any ordinary conditions could ever have had so malicious a spirit as that manifested against him. The devil had to do with all the wicked persecutions of the saints—the cutting out of tongues, the racking of their poor bodies, and the shooting out of bitter words from the tongue.

We are more used to this latter form of persecution today than in olden times; for the world—the average man—would not permit the things done in the dark ages. But the wicked feelings are there—the animosity, the gall. As the Apostle James says, the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity, and it sets on fire the course of nature. (James 3:6) And so in our day the tongue and the pen are often used as weapons of evil.

We have all noticed, perhaps, how willing the world is to speak evil and to believe evil—how willing to say that which they do not know. This is all because they are obsessed, besieged by the adversary. But we are living in a more civilized day than were our brethren of the past. We think the individual who does these wicked things today—who slanders and vilifies God's people—is under some malevolent influence. And then the temptation comes to us to speak evil of them in return—to do all the harm we can against them. If we find this disposition to speak evil arising within us, we are to resist it, to allow the fire of this time to burn up these elements of our old nature. And the fire will have this purifying effect upon us, if we receive it aright, making us meet for the heavenly kingdom.

SECONDARY SOURCE OF TRIAL

Not only from the adversary do these trials come, but they come from the weaknesses and imperfections of others. And perhaps those that come from the brethren are the most difficult to bear. We know that "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not." But when it comes to those who have made a profession of loyalty to God, and who have named the name of Christ, whether they be Presbyterians or Episcopalians, Baptists or Congregationalists, or those who are Bible Students—if in any one of these we find the persecuting spirit, we are more discouraged and less likely to have the proper sympathy for them.

We are to remember, however, that nothing can happen to us unless the Father permits it. If we did not get the trials from Methodists or Presbyterians or Bible Students, we would get them from somewhere else, in order to burn up our dross and strengthen the elements of our character which need development. We are to take all of these things patiently, knowing that they are working out for us a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." We are to look away from these things and to recognize the grand purpose of God. We are to reflect that this is the way in which God is chiseling us and polishing us to make us ready for the grand temple of glory. And when we think of this, we can look with fortitude and patience on these fiery trials, recognizing that we shall get a blessing out of them.

"Through many a thorny path he leads
My tired feet;
Through many a path of tears I go,
But it is sweet
To know that he is close to me—
My God, my Guide;
He leadeth me, and so I walk
Quite satisfied."

Thus we learn as people of God to glory. We may glory in all the things which he has done for us and in us. The things that naturally would be least likely to be gloried in are tribulations, persecutions. But we may glory also in these. We may rejoice in them—not that we enjoy the tribulations, the persecutions, but we realize that these are working for us characters pleasing to God. The Lord will see to it that we get enough, and not too much, tribulation.

The word tribulation has the thought of serious trouble—a combination of troubles that makes the experiences serious. It would not mean that we would fall into some difficulty and soon get out again, but it would mean severe and continued troubles. Sometimes we cannot see why we have the troubles that come to us. They may come in the form of sickness, or death, or financial trouble, or humiliation of our unrecognized pride and self-love; or we may have a combination of trouble. There is no difference whether it is one kind or the other—they are tribulations. But it is for us to recognize that in all these trials the Lord makes them work for our good.

The world has persecutions of a certain sort. People in business will sometimes persecute one another. Sometimes persecutions are in a political way. The Lord indicates to the church that we may rejoice in any persecution, especially if we are in no way blame-worthy. "If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed [feel disgraced]," said the Apostle. (1 Peter 4:14-16) He is suffering because the "darkness hateth the light," and slanders the truth. This has been so from Jesus' time all the way down.

BLESSING RESULTING FROM PERSECUTION

Shall we say that we will not be reconciled to any certain experience? No; we have committed all to the Lord, and it is for us to bow in full submission, knowing by faith and from the assurance of God's Word that all things are working together for good to us. No matter what the trouble may be, it will bring patience if we are rightly exercised. Some of the Lord's people may have patience well developed, and thus not need so many of these experiences. But whatever we need, we should desire.

We remind you again of the story of a certain brother who took account of his qualities, and decided that he was most lacking in patience. Then he prayed most earnestly to the Lord to give him more patience. He kept on praying; and the more he prayed, the more difficulties he seemed to have, the greater trials of patience. Then it occurred to him that this was the answer to his prayer; for that was the way to get patience. And when he began to see the matter aright, it encouraged him and made a great change. He saw that the Lord was answering his prayer by giving him the very experiences he needed to develop in his character this grace of the Spirit.

"Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience, and experience, hope." This does not mean we get all of our patience first, then all of our experience, and then all of our hope; but that they are all developing together. We have a good courage and are desirous of pleasing the Lord; we are not ashamed to be his children. And the reason why we are not ashamed is that with this hope, we have the realization of God's love; and we are able to say, "If I had tribulation, I now have more hope and more patience. I am getting the results in these tribulations, in the fruits of the Spirit." Whoever escapes experiences that would develop the fruits of the holy Spirit will never gain a place in the kingdom.

Patience can be gained only by trials. Faith can be developed only by necessities. We have need of preparation for our future work. This can be gained only by those experiences which will touch us with a feeling of the infirmities and difficulties and trials of the groaning creation to whom we shall be ministers and representatives when we reach the throne. For us, then, the lesson of present experiences is to resist evil; not with evil, but with good. "Be not overcome of evil; but resist evil with good."—Romans 12:21.

ELISHA'S RESTITUTION MINISTRY

OCTOBER 17—2 KINGS 4, 5.

ELISHA SUCCEEDS ELIJAH—THE TYPICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS—HEALS THE SPRING OF WATER—ENCOUNTERS YOUNG HOODLUMS—PRONOUNCES SENTENCE AGAINST THEM—THEIR PENALTY—REWARDS FAITH OF A WIDOW—HEALS GENERAL NAAMAN'S LEPROSY—IS CONSULTED RESPECTING NAAMAN'S FUTURE.

"I am Jehovah that healeth thee."—Exodus 15:26.

For more than six thousand years our earth has been under a divine condemnation because of Father Adam's sin and its propagation through his posterity, and because of God's sentence against sin. For these reasons, as the Apostle declares, our world has been under a "reign of Sin and Death." (Romans 5:14-19) And it still is; for the curse, or penalty,

has not yet been lifted. Thank God, the Bible abounds with precious promises that a better day is soon to dawn! That glorious epoch is to be inaugurated by Messiah's kingdom, for which Jesus taught his people to pray, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, even at it is done in heaven." Then will come a glorious change to the world. Satan shall be bound

for a thousand years. The reign of Sin and Death will cease, and a reign of Righteousness and Life will begin.

That reign is to last a thousand years. We have the words of Jesus himself that its result will be the entire removal of the curse—the freeing of mankind from every difficulty and ailment which came upon the world as a penalty for Father Adam's sin, etc. From the very beginning of Messiah's reign God's blessing will begin to come to the world through him, and correspondingly the curse will fade away; but the full blessing will not be here, and the curse will not be entirely removed, until about the close of the Millennium. It will be a grand work. The promise of Jesus is that eventually there shall be no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying; for the former things of sin and death will have passed away and he will have made all things new, as the great King of kings and Lord of lords.—Revelation 21:4, 5; 19:16; 1 Corinthians 15:26, 54.

ELISHA'S WORK A TYPE OF RESTITUTION BLESSINGS

In a previous lesson we pointed out that Bible students understand Elijah's career to have been typical of the experiences of the church in the flesh, ending with glorification. Approximately we might expect that Elisha, the companion of Elijah, upon whom fell Elijah's mantle of power and authority as the Lord's representative, prefigured a class. Our thought is that he typified two classes; first, that he typified those who now are associated with the Elijah class; and that, after the taking of Elijah and his recrossing Jordan, he became a type of those in whose charge will be the dispensing of Restitution blessings during the Millennium. Let us notice a few of his figurative doings.

PURE WATER—PURE TRUTH

(1) A certain stream carried brackish water through an otherwise favored district. Elisha took a handful of salt, went to the head of the brook and poured it in there, commanding in the name of the Lord that it should henceforth be pure water. Looking for a typical significance of this in the Millennium, we remember that a stream of water represents a stream of truth, and that brackish water would represent impure doctrines. A purification of the stream at its foundation would well represent what the Lord has promised through the Prophet respecting Messiah's day. "They will I turn unto the people a pure message, that they may call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."—Zeph. 3:9.

The salt cast into the spring reminds us of the Master's words respecting his true followers, "Ye are the salt of the earth." (Matthew 5:13) It will be in and through the glorified salt of the earth that the blessing will come, the streams of truth for human refreshment for a thousand years. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God will be made to fill the whole earth, as the waters cover the great deep.—Isaiah 11:9; Hab. 2:14.

HURT FIGHTING BEARS

(2) As Elisha proceeded on his journey, some young hoodlums accosted him, saying, "Go up, thou bald head!" These were youths—not children, not babies. Elisha turned and pronounced upon them a punishment, translated in our text a curse. He denounced their conduct as wrong and declared that it would have a punishment. The punishment came speedily. Two she-bears came upon them and tore them, wounded them. There is no suggestion that the bears ate them or killed them; but the forty-two young ruffians all experienced wounds from their conflict with the bears, and this apparently was the punishment for their wrong-doing.

After some such manner there will be judgments in the world during the Millennium—punishments for every wrong course, rewards for every right deed. Thus, through chastisements, called in the Bible judgments, the world will be taught right and wrong for a thousand years. As it is written, "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isaiah 26:9) It is for this reason that the Millennial age is called the world's day of judgment. St. Peter explains that a day with the Lord is as a thousand years. (2 Peter 3:8) St. Peter tells us that "God hath appointed a Day [a thousand years], in the which he will judge the world in righteousness." (Acts 17:31) The judgment will be in the nature of rewards and punishments wisely administered, that the people may learn righteousness and abhor sin.

OIL ACCORDING TO HER FAITH

(3) A poor widow in distress because of debt appealed to the Prophet Elisha for aid. She found that her resources were exhausted, except that she had some olive oil. He directed her to take all the vessels that she had and to borrow from her neighbors and to pour the oil into these until they were filled then to sell the oil for money wherewith to pay her

debts and to use the remainder for the wherewithal to live.

This story may illustrate for us the blessed rewards of faith that the Lord will grant during the Millennium. Indeed, it illustrates the general principle on which the Lord operates. The debt was to be paid. Justice was not to be violated, and any miracle to be performed would be preferably by the blessing of something already possessed. This doubtless it will be during the Millennium. The Lord will bless what people may have according to their faith in using it in harmony with his will; and it will increase with that for the full supply of all their needs.

Our Lord Jesus illustrated this in some of his miracles; and we should not forget that he made it plain that his miracles typified, or foreshadowed, his coming in the glory and the majesty of his kingdom work. (John 2:11) One of these was the feeding of the five thousand people from the small quantity of fish already at hand. Every person has something of a talent, or possession. The lesson to us would be: Use what you have, asking God's blessing, and seek to use it in harmony with his Word, nothing doubting. The Lord always rewards faith. In the case of this widow the oil was quite sufficient to fill all the vessels she had borrowed, as well as all of her own vessels. Then it stopped.

SYRIAN GENERAL CURED OF LEPROSY

(4) In the Far East leprosy is one of the most dreaded diseases and is generally accepted as incurable. The Bible seems to refer to leprosy as a figure, or type, of sin because it is incurable, except by divine miracle. Naaman, the chief commander of the Syrian king's forces, was a leper. In his family was a little Hebrew housemaid, who had been captured in one of the battles between the Syrians and the Israelites. She noted her master's plight, and remarked to her mistress about the great Prophet in Israel, Elisha, who could do anything, she believed. She suggested that he be applied to.

What seemed like idle talk was seized upon by General Naaman as a last and only hope. From his king he obtained a letter of introduction to the King of Israel, which in substance said: "I am sending this letter by the hand of my chief general, Naaman, who is a leper; and I desire you to see that he is healed." The king of Israel was appalled. He knew that he had no power over such a disease, and that it was ranked as incurable. He concluded that the Syrian king was trying to pick a quarrel with him, and that this meant war, great trouble. He rent his outer garment, as was the custom of the time, in indication of his great distress. The matter was told to the Prophet Elisha, who immediately sent the king word not to be disturbed, but to send the general to him. This was done.

When the general arrived at the Prophet's home with quite a caravan of servants, costly presents, etc., he sent word to the Prophet respecting his errand and that he had been sent by the king to him. Elisha curtly sent him word to go to the River Jordan and wash seven times. Naaman was angry. He said, "This man does not even treat me civilly. Why does he not come down to see me and make some kind of recognition of my rank and of the nation which I represent?" He then declared that there were rivers in Syria of much better water than the Jordan and that Elisha was trifling with him.

While Elisha's conduct undoubtedly was proper and directed of God and turned out well, nevertheless it would not be a wise course for the Lord's people generally to follow. In the New Testament the apostles urge that the servants of God should be courteous toward all and render honor to whom honor is due. However, the matter worked out well. The servants of the general suggested to him that he had to go by Jordan any way on his return home, and why not try, as the Prophet of Israel had said. It could do no harm and might do some good. Any way the Prophet evidently had not been trying to make money out of him, nor to get the costly presents which he had brought, and which he knew he would gladly give for such a cure. The anger of the general cooled. He bathed seven times in Jordan, as directed. The result was a miraculous cure.

Naaman was not thankless. He returned to the home of the Prophet to thank him and to urge him to accept the presents he had brought; but the Prophet would accept nothing. He was merely acting as a divine representative. His powers were not for sale. They were divine blessings. Let the General acknowledge them to God! And this General Naaman did. He confessed that no other God than Jehovah could perform such a miracle. He was apparently ready to do the will of God heartily, and asked respecting his future course. The Prophet did not tell him to become a Jew and to renounce the heathen religion of his own land, but encouraged him to return to his home and continue in his office.

General Naaman inquired as to his responsibility. If he worshipped the true God, what must he do when in the company of the king and the latter wished to go to the house of a false god? Elisha's answer in substance was that if the general made

full profession of his faith in the true God, it would not be improper for him to accompany his master to the house of the false god; for his own adherence to Jehovah God would be recognized.

OTHER RESTITUTION TYPES

OCTOBER 24—2 KINGS 6:8-23.

ELISHA AWAKENS THE SHUNAMMITE'S SON—PUNISHES HIS SERVANT GEHAZI—ENTRAPS THE SYRIAN ARMY AND BENDERS THEM GOOD FOR EVIL—IMPORTANT LESSONS IN RIGHTEOUSNESS.

"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."—Psalm 34:7.

In today's Study we note Elisha's awakening of the Shunammite's son, his punishment of his servant Gehazi with leprosy, and his entrapping of the Syrian army. (2 Kings 4:8-37; 5:20-27) While these things may not find exact counterparts in the events of the coming kingdom, they nevertheless represent principles which will be in operation then—the principles of reward for right doing and punishment for intentional wrong-doing. All these principles will operate during Messiah's kingdom; and under these the world will gradually made progress. "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."—Isaiah 26:9.

AWAKENING THE SHUNAMMITE'S SON

Millions of people will long remember a most touching scene in the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION, representing the death of the Shunammite's son, and showing how Elisha awakened the lad from the sleep of death and restored him to his parents. Perhaps no more touching film was ever produced. Few saw it without tears. It pictured the coming of restitution work of the Millennium, when all the sleeping dead will be awakened, to resume their lives and to complete their education in the school of experience under more happy and more favorable conditions than any enjoy at the present time, except the church—those who during this age are blessed of the Lord with hearing ears, eye of faith and obedient hearts.

GEHAZI SMITTEN WITH LEPROSY

Gehazi had in many respects been a faithful servant to Elisha. As a result, he had blessings of knowledge which the majority of people did not possess. With the knowledge came responsibility; hence the severe punishment inflicted upon the man for hypocrisy and deception. We are reminded of the text which declares that if a good man depart from his well-doing and sin wilfully, his past good deeds shall not be remembered, even as it is with the evil-doer who, coming to God with full repentance and change of heart, is forgiven and received into God's family. His past evil is entirely ignored, except as it may bear its fruit in certain weaknesses of mind or body.—Ezekiel 3:17-21; 18:20-24; 33:10-16.

When General Naaman perceived the great miracle accomplished in his cleansing from leprosy, he returned to Elisha, offering thanks to God and desiring the Prophet to receive the presents which he had brought. But Elisha would receive none of them. In this he manifested what we believe is always the Lord's Spirit—never to sell spiritual things for money. It is for this reason that some ministers now object to taking up collections, holding fairs or soliciting money in any manner. Their contention is that whatever is given to the Lord's service should be given with a free hand and a ready heart. "The Father seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:23) It is a privilege to give to the Lord and his cause; for the Almighty is not poor, that he should need our gifts. All the gold and silver are his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.—Haggai 2:8; Psalm 50:10.

Under such a noble example Gehazi should have profited, but did not. He allowed covetousness to come into his mind. He had seen the rich Babylonian garments, and thought how fine it would be if he could have some of these and plenty of changes of linen garments. He would be like a prince. He had perceived that General Naaman regretted that his presents were not accepted. He pursued, and told the general that the Prophet had said that while he did not desire any of the garments or other things for himself, he had concluded that he might use some of these for his servants, and that he would accept gifts for them. The ruse was successful. The servant was recognized as the one seen at Elisha's place. The goods were joyfully given to him. He hid them away secretly, until the Prophet called him, told him all about the matter and pronounced his punishment—leprosy.

So will it be in the coming age. Any disobedience will meet with swift punishment. Of the judges of that time it is written that they will not judge with the hearing of the ear nor with sight of the eye; they will judge righteously.

ELISHA'S CAPTURE ATTEMPTED

It was probably after the death of General Naaman that the king of Syria declared war against the Israelites. To his surprise he found that every move he made was checkmated. If he planned to capture a certain city, it seemed as though the Israelitish king knew every detail. Thus his endeavors came to naught. He looked for a traitor amongst his own people and his own household, or for some explanation. Then it was told him by one of his servants, "Behold, the Prophet Elisha is in Israel and makes known to their king all thy counsels, even those of thy bed-chamber." Apparently the knowledge of Jehovah and Elisha had spread from General Naaman to some of the household of the king.

Intent upon his conquest, the king sought to capture Elisha. If he could not get some profit out of the man for himself and his side, he could at least keep him from communicating with the king of Israel. He sent spies to find where Elisha dwelt, and located him at the little city of Dothan. Thereupon he sent a good-sized force, quite sufficient to surround the city and make it impossible for Elisha to escape—horses, chariots, etc. He would do two things—not only capture a city, but capture the Prophet.

In the morning early, Elisha's servant looked forth and beheld the companies of the enemy on every side, barring every way of escape. He was terrified and said, "Alas, my master! how shall we do?" Promptly came the answer, "Fear not; for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." The servant did not appreciate this; for he had not come to realize fully what divine powers were with his master. Then Elisha prayed that the eyes of the young man might be opened; and he beheld angelic hosts, horses and chariots of fire about Elisha. This was sufficient to give the young man the needed courage and to assure him of God's power.

Just what kind of vision this makes no particular difference. Undoubtedly it was merely a vision, without any reality; but it served its purpose. God's power surrounds all his consecrated people in an unlimited measure. These powers are exercised by spirit beings, entirely invisible to men. The important thing is to get the right thought—that under all conditions omnipotent power stands behind and completely surrounds those who are his. Nothing can befall this special class except in accord with the divine program. Whatever may occur in their experience will be of divine knowledge and permission; hence the promise to this class is that all things shall work together for their good.—Romans 8:28.

THE SYRIAN HOST CAPTURED

The Prophet exercised a supernatural power of blinding the Syrian host; but just what the power was or how it was accomplished we can only conjecture. Doubtless their eyes were wide open; and doubtless they saw the hills, valleys, roads, etc.; but the eyes of their understanding were closed, apparently, in some hypnotic manner. Elisha gave them to understand that he would lead them to the proper city; and he did so, guiding them straight to the city of Samaria, in through its gates. There, surrounded by the hosts of the capital, he broke the hypnotic spell. Their eyes opened; and they perceived that they were in the hands of their enemies, who, with drawn swords and leveled spears, offered no opportunity of escape. They had been entrapped, but not to their injury—for their good, for their instruction.

The king of Israel inquired of the Prophet whether or not he should smite these: and destroy them or what. The answer was "No; feed them and let them return peaceably to their own home." The king caught the spirit of the proposition, and not merely gave them bread and water, such as might be given prisoners, but made them a bountiful feast—treated them royally, treated them as friends. Then they were set free to go to their own land, there to tell the strange experience that had occurred and to demonstrate to their king the impossibility of successfully fighting against the kingdom of Israel under such circumstances.

INTERESTING LETTERS

NEWS FROM FRENCH BIBLE STUDENTS

I would be very grateful if you would kindly send me some tracts for distribution among sorrowing hearts, as the poor world is getting disheartened, and this is the right time for presenting to them the Gospel message. I have already made several such distributions, for which the people were very glad, several of them saying they wished they were already living in that glorious day. God's Word alone can bring them comfort.—JULES ROY.

Soon an era of righteousness shall be established by Christ and his bride, of whom we are invited to become a part. What a comfort this thought is to me through all the dangers of this hour! Here new opportunities are afforded me to bring this precious message to the friends—soldiers of my regiment. Now, as soon as I receive the TOWER, some of them want to read it ahead of me. They read also Vol. 1 of the STUDIES from time to time.—ELIE MALINGRAT.

I wish to inform you of the departure of Brother Louis Durieu for the Orient (Dardanelles). Being told to start without delay for Marseilles (where he probably still is), he was unable to write to you himself of his going, and thus to present you his brotherly regards. I was much delighted at the real comfort I derived from reading in the last TOWER that marvelous page about love. May the Lord bless it for all the divine Israel!—ELISE TRUEUX.

I am glad to be able to write to you these lines to express my great joy at receiving THE WATCH TOWER (French), which is so interesting and comforting in the troublous times now upon us! What a peace fills our hearts when everything is crashing about us! By the grace of God strengthening us, we are enabled to endure with patience and perseverance the greatest trials permitted of him for our spiritual welfare. Yes, we can love and praise our good heavenly Father for his many blessings.—M. NONGAILLARD.

We are very happy here at C— (near Dunkirk), being able to devote ourselves freely to holy study during the short time permitted us here below, and we pray the Lord to strengthen our faith upon the solid foundation of present truth, so as to better resist the tumultuous current beating about.—H. ROUSSEL.

Here in Liège (Belgium) everything is well in a temporal way, but God has blessed us still more spiritually. As you know, our meetings have never been interrupted. They still take place every Sunday in our hall at the Hawirs, and every Thursday at home. During the first three months of the war we had four meetings a week. Now, work is going on again in all the coal mines and we have been abundantly blessed.—F. PETRIE.

We thank the Lord more and more for having raised Pastor Russell and his valiant fellow-servants, through whom he has so generously and mercifully blessed us. We remember daily before the throne of heavenly grace the great help you lend to the good "grain" already garnered, as well as pray God to strengthen and sustain you by his all-powerful arm in the good fight you have undertaken; also for the cause of truth, for which you have vowed to be faithful unto death, on behalf of all the brethren and sisters.—VICTOR RANDOUR.

The following letters from brethren who are prisoners in Germany:

I have had the opportunity to preside at a meeting participated in by more than one hundred people. Helping me were some friends who had also studied the first and second volumes of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, as well as some tracts. With God's assistance. I have been enabled to give my experience before all the Protestants in the camp. The aforesaid friends left in March, I being sick at the time. Since then I have worked to spread the good tidings of the kingdom. "Do as occasion serve thee, for God is with thee." (1 Samuel 10:7) I want to work for the Lord, and may his grace be with me!—FREDERIC POLLARD.

With much joy I have received the books you forwarded me. I have read and studied them without ceasing, having asked of our brother J. H. his help to that extent. I have understood and I am following. What is necessary is to win the final victory. The contents of the books, where followed, cause a lasting effect. It is a meat that does not decay.—L. FLAMME (newly interested).

I have received news of my wife and relatives in Rouboix (invaded territory); they are in good health, and so are the dear brethren and sisters there. I see that the Lord knows how to keep his own through all their difficulties, and I pray him to give each of his beloved children the needed strength to bear every other trial that may still be in store in this evil day. Kindly send me some tracts and booklets, and also, if possible, some English and German tracts for distribution. I

thank you for the tracts received and the card, "My Morning Resolve."—JEAN HER.

SCRIPTURE PRECEDENTS FOLLOWED

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

Some time ago I read in THE BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY of a suit you had entered against Rev. J. J. Ross of Canada.

Now, I am only a humble seeker after truth, and I cannot criticize you, because I have not sufficient knowledge of the Scriptures to do so. There is, however, one point I would like to have cleared up; and if you would be so good as to take up a few lines in THE WATCH TOWER to answer me, I am sure it would do not only me a lot of good, but others also who may have given the matter serious thought.

The question is, dear Pastor, how could you as a follower of Jesus bring suit against a fellow creature, no matter how vilely he talked about you or your work?

You know how our Savior was talked about, and aside from a rebuke he did nothing. At least, he never sought redress through any legal agency.

I despise the clerical profession, because I know them to be liars and parasites, who suck a fat living from the parish; that is, a good part of them. Of course, there are many noble, misled men amongst them; and I am sure they will be rewarded for whatever good they may have done.

Please, dear Pastor, will you not answer one who is sorely troubled—one who believes your work the grandest ever undertaken, and who loves God and his people, although he feels himself an unworthy sinner—one who hates to think of one who is doing so grand and noble a work for Jesus, as not walking in his footsteps in every respect?

Yours sincerely.

A. WOODS.—New York.

REPLY BY EDITOR.

We are not certain that we did the wisest and best thing—the thing most pleasing to the Lord in the matter mentioned. However, the suit against Rev. Ross was not undertaken without consideration of the Lord's will and of the precedents of the Bible.

Amongst Bible students, informed respecting the divine Word and its requirements, Matthew 18:15-17 is the accepted standard of action:—

(1) Private conference;
(2) If necessary, taking a couple of brethren in a further endeavor to get at the right and to stop what is believed to be the wrong;

(3) In the event of the concurrence of the brethren that the wrong is being done, and of the refusal on the part of the wrong-doer to desist, the third step is to bring the matter before the church. If the church agrees, then the wrong-doer, if he still refuses to desist from the wrong course, is to be disfellowshipped—to be barred from any office or service of the church—treated as an outsider—"like a publican."

We could not see how this rule could be applied to Rev. Ross; for so far as we have knowledge he would have no regard whatever for such proceedings and could not be debarred finally from fellowship; because he recognizes no such fellowship. We felt, therefore, that any proceedings against Rev. Ross must be along the lines which he himself would recognize. He, like other ministers, recognizes the governments of this world as being parts of Christ's kingdom; and their courts, therefore, as being parts of the divine institution. For this reason we felt that we were approaching the subject from a just and Golden Rule standpoint in appealing to the courts of justice, which Rev. Ross recognizes as being the divine institution. In other words, we attempted to meet him on his own grounds.

As for Scriptural precedents: Jesus did not need to take his case before the courts, because his enemies did that—taking him before the chief priests and the Sanhedrin. They condemned him in the Jewish courts. When before his judges, Jesus offered no resistance, in the sense of using his power, either of eloquence or of divine energy, to resist their unjust decisions. He merely submitted himself with the complaint, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?"—John 18:23.

The Apostles, Peter and John, brought before the Sanhedrin court, made their defense. So also did St. Paul. On one occasion, because he thought he was not getting justice, he appealed to Caesar's court for whatever the Roman law might provide. Similarly, I appealed to the court having jurisdiction of Rev. Ross, having in mind to stop him from doing evil and from opposing the message of the Lord, which I am seeking to bear to all people. My attorneys, of course, were obliged to bring their action in harmony with the laws of the land. While the case was still pending, I wrote Rev. Ross, assuring him that I had no unkind intention, and proposing that I would discontinue the suit if he would promise to discontinue his injurious, slanderous course.