

cepted of him in the Beloved, for love worketh no ill to his neighbor.

The fourth commandment is no different from the others of the ten. It is on a lower plane than would be proper for the House of Sons, and consequently was never given to them. It merely commands rest from labor, but under the comprehensive law of love to God and man, and through the possession of

the Father's Spirit, the new creatures in Christ Jesus have a higher rest than had the natural Israelites. Ours is a rest of faith and trust in God, and in Christ our Lord through whom he is working all things according to the counsel of his own will. Ever since Pentecost this rest of the people of God, as it pertains even to the present life, is perpetual, and not merely one day out of seven.

VOL. XXVII

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No. 4

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

SOCIALISTS ALARM BRITISH

London, January 17.—The first almost boundless enthusiasm, with which official Liberalism greeted the results of the elections, is giving place to uneasiness, in which the whole of the middle classes are beginning to share, at the phenomenal and quite unexpected successes of the socialistic labor party. The purely labor members already number thirty, and there will probably be, for the first time in English history, a solid party of sixty labor members, whose admitted demands include the payment of members, abolition of the House of Lords, Irish Home Rule, and nationalization of land, telephones, railways, factories, mines, shipping and all other instruments of production. This is the proclaimed policy of the national administrative council of the Independent Labor Party, whose direct nominees these labor candidates are. In many of these proposals, the labor party has the support of both the Irish Nationalists, numbering eighty, and probably one-fourth of the new Liberal members, many of whom were elected on distinct labor pledges, making altogether a party formidable enough to terrorize the ministry and party which includes railway directors, chairmen of telephone companies, rich manufacturers and other representative capitalists. This is why elections are spoken of as more than a mere party landslide: they mean a revolution in English politics, the end of which no man can see.

The Times, which has been a thorough supporter of Mr. Chamberlain's fiscal policy, says that "while the Unionists and Liberals have been disputing about their own issues, fiscal reform, popularly controlled education, and Chinese labor in South Africa, another vast issue has been shaping itself quietly and silently, without observation. That issue is whether the working classes, who form the bulk of the electorate, are to dictate a policy they desire, or go on contented with choosing between the policies offered by the traditional parties." They decided for the first alternative, they are asserting their power. Hence the Times adds, "The city of London, by the emphatic return of Unionists yesterday, shows that *financiers and business men realize the greater economic dangers ahead, than any of the Chamberlain proposals could produce at their worst.*"—Montreal Star.

"LOOKING AFTER THE THINGS COMING"

That the British are greatly stirred over the peaceable "Revolution" just started by the Socialists and Labor party at the polls is evident. The London "Daily Mail" states the matter concisely, thus:

"Public curiosity is naturally excited as to what is the meaning of the return of so many Labor members to the new Parliament. So long as Labor and Socialist agitators had to confine their oratory and efforts to street-corner meetings and market-place demonstrations, the 'respectable' portion of the community looked upon them with contemptuous indifference. But when great industrial constituencies begin to send these agitators to Parliament the matter assumes a serious aspect. What does it all mean? Is it a revolution? Does it portend the overthrow of existing institutions? Is the country threatened with ruin by the coming of this new power into politics?"

"It certainly means a revolution in the sense that the purpose of Labor Representation is to use political power in quite a different way and for quite a different purpose from its past uses.

"I am not concerned now to justify the policy and the object of the Labor Representation movement. We are satisfied of the wisdom of the policy and the justice of the object. I want now only to explain the policy and the object for the information of those who do not understand either. Then they may banish their fears or strengthen their defences, just as their wisdom or self-interest dictates."

GERMAN KAISER FEARS SAME FATE AS CZAR

One German authority says that the German emperor has been deeply impressed by the fate which has overtaken his royal relative, the czar of Russia. It would have been im-

possible, it is argued, for the Russia revolutionaries to have made any headway in Russia if it had not been for the unexpected defeat of the Russian armies and navies at the hands of the Japanese. A shock to the German arms, the destruction of German prestige, and the kaiser knows he would be as much at the mercy of the revolutionary forces as is the czar today. More than he fears France, more than he fears England, the kaiser fears the growth of Socialism at home. His increase in the army and the navy is really for the purpose of putting down rebellion at home. Except in the case of an extremity the kaiser would never appeal to a contest at arms to settle a difficulty with any of the great powers of earth. It is necessary for him to create the impression that the country is on the verge of war with great foreign powers in order to beat the Socialists, but war is the last thing the kaiser wants, and the last thing that he expects.

This same authority says the kaiser has learned other lessons from the Russian trouble which he will not be slow to act upon in the case of necessity. For instance, among the really first-class powers, next to Russia, the German Government has undoubtedly been the most autocratic and despotic. The kaiser has seen the collapse of an autocratic form of government, the complete breakdown of a state managed by the bureaucracy, and he is said to have deliberately told some of the elder statesmen of Germany that the policy of his government in the future must be more and more in the direction of a constitutional government.

OMINOUS SIGNS

Should Russia, in course of time and after a glut of horrors, become a Socialist or a semi-Socialist state, the revolutionary wave would spread, for good or ill, to other nations.

Already we read of Austrians and Hungarians insisting upon universal suffrage, and a delegation of no less than 200,000 workmen filling the Vienna ringstrasse to impress parliament with their earnestness in making the demand.

In Germany, the Socialists, inspired by events in Russia, have begun an agitation for the reform of the election laws which will give them the representation in the Reichstag, possibly a majority of that body, to which they are entitled. On Jan. 14 they will distribute 300,000 copies of a revolutionary manifesto, and on Jan. 31 they plan to hold 250 public demonstrations. The Kaiser's advisers are urging him to employ troops to suppress this menacing agitation.—Cleveland (O.) Press.

VERY SAD IF TRUE

The Daily press of New York has published the essence of an address given by President Faunce before the Baptist ministers of New York city. They say he utterly denied the doctrine of atonement and rejected it from his belief. The Doctor has not denied this version of his address and hence we suppose it is true. Is there any wonder that students go wrong when college presidents lead the way? Is not Dr. Patton right in saying that, with colleges as now constituted, there will be no Christianity left at the close of the twentieth century? But God can raise up his witness outside of the college in the future, just as he has done in the past, and he will witness outside of the college in the future just as he has done in the past.—Watchword and Truth.

REFORM IN PERSIA, TOO

"The dominion of the Shah is about the last in the world, now that Russia is abandoning autocracy and China is considering domestic reforms, where a demand for constitutional government would be expected, or, if made, would be granted. Persia is an absolute monarchy of the Oriental type, resting solely upon force, and the slightest whim of the ruler has been considered law. Yet the St. Petersburg dispatch, based upon reports by caravan, declare that a thousand merchants and mullahs, or priests, becoming dissatisfied with the Shah's rule, left the capital as a protest and were afterward reconciled by Muzaffer ed Din's consent to the election of a representative body chosen by the merchants, priests and land-

owners to constitute a House of Justice, whose duties will be administrative and legislative."

THE FEDERATION IDEA

For religious interest in 1906 a close second to the evangelistic campaigns is the federation idea. Presbyterian North and Cumberland Presbyterians have just agreed in committee to unite, and no doubt is felt that their respective general assemblies, meeting in May next, will approve the action of these committees. There is a stubborn Cumberland minority, made up for the most part of the conservatives, with some of the vested or salaried interests, but nobody professes to fear any such outcome as that of the Wee Frees in Scotland. The union of these two bodies will make a denomination of nearly 1,500,000 members. Presbyterians South show little inclination to come into the union, but there is a chance that some of the smaller Presbyterian bodies may give up autonomy and join the others.

The first meeting of the national council of the Combined Congregational, Methodist Protestant and United Brethren churches is to take place at Dayton, Ohio, on February 7. This union differs little from the more inclusive plan, as yet called federation, proposed by the thirty bodies which met in conference in November, and proposed the formation of a federal council similar to, but larger than, the council about to meet in Dayton. If the Dayton council works out harmoniously the plans to come before it, there will be presented the first concrete example of a union of divided Protestantism.

Baptists have come together in a general convention, and their federation includes the Baptists of Canada. Big plans are in hand for the initial meeting of this convention in May, looking to still closer union and to aggressive and common work, especially missionary in the West. Baptists are reaching out towards the Free Baptists and the Disciples of Christ. They have changed their point of view markedly during the past ten years, particularly the views that relate to "close communion." With this change there seems, so Baptist leaders say, to be no good reason why immersionists should longer be separated. During the year now opening there will be further examinations of the doctrinal differences of Disciples and Baptists, looking to closer relations, and with the possible outcome of actual union in course of time.—Globe Democrat.

AMALGAMATION OF THREE STRONG DENOMINATIONS

Toronto.—The central committee composed of representatives from the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational churches throughout Canada have agreed upon a code of doctrines that will unify the three denominations into one great church which shall be known as the "United Church of Canada." In arriving at the terms of doctrine, the revised confession of faith of the Presbyterian church was used in conjunction with the plan proposed by the Montreal committee and these have been so revised and amended as to contain all the great essential truths of the creeds of the three churches and the joint body have agreed that the Westminster confession of faith shall be practically a dead letter in Canada. The doctrine of election was the point about which the Presbyterian end of the committee were most concerned, while the predestination theory was another. So far as the Methodist church was concerned, the question of entire sanctification was the sticking point. These differences were so moulded that all objection by the members of the committee was removed. The doctrine on Arminianism, which is that a man is not predestined to perdition, but makes his own destiny and reward, has been adopted in the new church creed. The new church is to be acknowledged as "One Holy Catholic" as well as of the innumerable company of saints of all ages and nations. Every church throughout the world professing obedience to Christ is recognized and the Lord's supper and baptism are acknowledged to be personal obligations as signs and seals of covenant. The proper subjects for baptism are declared to be "believers and infants."

These matters will be submitted to the several denominations throughout the Dominion and the action of these bodies through the courts of the churches will reach the central executive next year. The new church is to be governed by a supreme body to be known as "The General Conference," after the Methodist form. The belief is that this is to be a Council after the Congregational idea with a chairman. The next body nearer the people is to be "The Presbytery."

Dayton, O., Feb. 9.—The United Church of America was launched today, representing the Congregationalists, United Brethren, and Protestant Methodists of the United States.

TURNING ON THE LIGHT

Pointing to our day the Master declared, there is nothing hid that shall not be revealed. The fulfilment of this is attested on every hand: in the insurance scandals of our land; in the Belgian cruelties in Africa—the maiming and killing

of the natives to increase the wealth of the rubber monopoly and others, in the practical slavery of the diamond-mine laborers of Rhodesia, etc. Now we have a horrible report of the doings of the "religious," "orthodox," "benevolent" Dutch Government in its colony in India.

It is one of the Deputies (Congressmen) who is there used to turn on the light. We quote the *Denver Post*:—

Van Deventer, the new Liberal deputy, continues his disclosures of Dutch atrocities in Dutch India. He says the queen authorized the formation of a special corps of uniformed murderers, known as the "Marechaussee" regiment, whose motto is: "No pardon for the natives, and no prisoners." This regiment is commanded by European officers and consists of the most murderous blacks "in her majesty's colonies."

When sent on an expedition into the interior, they make it a point to bring back a portion of the body of at least one murdered enemy; some of these troopers own hundreds of such trophies. The troops, consisting of 300 men only, have the following record of murders committed on various expeditions: First expedition, 318 slain "enemies;" second, 612; third, 921; fourth, 1,815; fifth, 2,085; sixth, 2,853; seventh, 4,126.

The increase in the killings is due to the fact that murderous blacks gradually learned the trick of turning their Mausers into dum-dum bullets by filing off the points of the cartridges.

"And what causes these expeditions, commanded and sanctioned by her most gracious majesty?" demanded the deputy.

"They are undertaken to frighten the native chiefs into placing at the rich planters' disposal cheap labor, thousands and again thousands of Malay coolies, that must work for a pittance to swell the coffers of the monopolists and allow the native rulers to wallow in whiskey and white women."—Bulletin.

* * *

"The love of money is the root of all evil," says the Book. We see it exemplified everywhere. All these revelations are awakening the world to better ideas of justice. But what about the church, whose nominal representatives, financial and political princes are thus exposed? It is no worse perhaps, but merely exposed. But there is a true church of "saints," though only "the Lord knoweth them that are his."

"ETERNAL TORMENTS" WILL REMAIN

The St. Louis Presbytery answered in the negative an overture from the Milwaukee (Wis.) presbytery suggesting the omission of the words, "be cast into eternal torments," from the creed. The overture stated that the phrase was not Scriptural and urged that the words, "everlasting destruction" were sufficient in the creed.

Evidently the "sweet morsel" of the dark ages is yet too valuable an asset to be discarded. The blasphemy of the divine character and Word must continue, because it may be helpful to revivalists in country districts.

HOME MISSIONS AND SOME CENSUS FIGURES

BY REV. S. F. TENNEY, IN "CHRISTIAN OBSERVER."

The last United States Census shows that the twenty counties comprised in the Presbytery of Eastern Texas have an aggregate area of 17,548 square miles,—a territory more than seventeen times as large as Rhode Island, more than eight times as large as Delaware, nearly twice as large as Maryland, more than twice as large as Massachusetts, more than half as large as Maine, half as large as Indiana, nearly half as large as Tennessee, and more than half as large as South Carolina.

The population of these twenty counties in 1900 was 287,631, and is much larger now. The gain in population in these counties during the ten years (from 1890 to 1900) was more than forty per cent.—some of the counties doubling their population and some more than doubling. Within the past few years these counties have developed wonderfully in rice farming, in the saw-mill business, in the production of oil, in fruit-raising and truck farming, in the construction of a number of lines of important railroads. The town of Sour Lake, a few years ago, was an insignificant village away from any railroad. Now it has railroad connection, and will perhaps have several railroads soon, and is a city of over three thousand inhabitants. A Presbyterian church has been organized there. Batson's Prairie, until recently, was only a country neighborhood, unknown to the world.

Now it is estimated to have a population of about two thousand, and is a great oil producing centre. Saratoga, another oil-producing centre, is not far from Sour Lake and Batson's Prairie. In Houston county where in 1871 I preached in a log school house in the midst of a pine forest, now stands the young city of Kennard and one of the largest saw-mills in the world.

ABOUT FOUNDATIONS

BY REV. J. R. JACOBS, IN "CHRISTIAN OBSERVER."

One of the handsomest structures in San Marcos, Texas, is a church recently erected. But already its walls are badly seamed and fissured and a collapse seems not remote. The recognized cause of this lies in inadequate foundations. Is not like disaster threatening our church's work?

The cry for ministers for vacant pulpits comes from all sides. But we fail to find them; that is, enough of them. We cannot find them; no adequate supply exists. If one church obtain it is often but by the robbery, or at least the deprivation, of another. . . .

The contrast in this matter between conditions some thirty years ago and now, is startling. Take the years 1876 and now nearly 1906. In this thirty years our membership has grown approximately 120 per cent., our churches 72 per cent., our ministers in number only 50 per cent., and candidates and licentiates only 38 per cent. Then we had one minister to every one and four-fifths churches, now we have but one to every 2, even counting as active all aged, sick and infirm. Then we had preparing one candidate or licentiate to every six and four-fifths churches; now we have one only to every eight and one-half churches. The figures tell the tale. . . .

HOW MUCH OF IT IS TRUE!

BY REV. H. B. PRATT, IN "CHRISTIAN OBSERVER."

One of our religious weeklies has recently published a communication from beyond the Sea, entitled "*Egyptian Civilization before 4,000 years B. C.*," on which, with humble confession of my own ignorance of such matters, I beg leave to ask the maturer judgment of the Editors of the *Observer*, or that of some one of its many well qualified readers. We are used to reading in the secular press statements of the kind there made in reference to the antiquity of the ancient civilization, which violently impugn the truth of Bible History; but when they appear in a religious journal, it seems to me the proper thing to do to challenge them, and ask what truth there really is in them. Like the rest of the School, the writer makes his statements with a degree of confidence which puts to shame the diffidence of many who profess to believe and even to teach the Bible. "There was at least (he says in reference to recent alleged Egyptian discoveries) before the world evidence of the close of the period previously considered prehistoric, showing the development of the arts, writing and civilization of Egypt, and the composition of a race which since has maintained its character during 6,000 years. The question was, *Where was all this civilization of 5,000 years B. C. developed?*"

With equal confidence Prof. Hilprecht is reported to speak of buildings and other remains of the ancient civilization of Assyria and Babylon which go back 6,000, or 7,000, and if my memory does not mislead me, 8,000 years before Christ. Now does even a remote degree of certainty attach to these ancient dates? Another writer placidly assures his readers that modern discoveries in Egypt compel us to recast our chronology in such a way as will locate Abraham "*in modern rather than in ancient times*," or words to that effect. Now how much of all this is "*gold*," and how much is simply "*brass*?" We live in a day when, for many of the purposes of real or pretended scholarship and science, "*brass is more valuable than gold*,"—as many of our "*Higher Critics*" have taught us.

On the Cincinnati Southern Railway, the "*High Bridge*" passes, like a spider's web, over the Kentucky River, at a height of some 250 or 300 feet above the stream, on a single span of perhaps 1,200 feet from bank to bank. At first the trains passed slowly over the yawning abyss; but at the time I was there they told me that after making the terminals perfectly straight, so as to put the trains in exact alignment before they reached the bridge, it was found to be *safest* to put on all possible steam and go flying over the point of danger at the rate of 40 miles an hour. Now does that illustrate *animus* and *modus operandi* of our Higher Critics and

their foster brothers, the archeologists of the same School?—*most bold, where least secure!*

The written history of the Bible dates back to the times of Moses; which I am old-fashioned enough still to place at about 1,500 years before Christ; and we have by divine revelation and by the pen of Moses (or of scribes who wrote under his inspection and superintendence), the authentic history of Abraham and Lot, which it will not hurt us still to place at about 1900 B. C. Now then, is it a fact, or is it fiction, that the monuments and written records of Egypt and Babylon, by any fair and reliable interpretation (for so far as I can see the translations vary very widely), carry us back 2000, 3,000 or even 4,000 years before Abraham was born? *Is consecutive written history good for anything?* or is it only clay tablets and hieroglyphics (which our savants have only recently begun to decipher), with paintings and monumental inscriptions (made by unknown hands, and which Prof. A. H. Sayce avers have often been tampered with), and disconnected papyrus rolls, and the like, that are to be relied on?

We lay the written word of God to pledge, with Jesus Christ our Lord as sponsor for the reliability of the record (John 5:45, 46), that (all systems of chronology apart) in the days of Abraham and Lot, "*that goodly land*" which Jehovah gave as heritage to Abraham "*his friend*"—"the glory of all lands," as Ezekiel fondly called it, even in the days of its decadence and his own captivity, was so sparsely peopled that God bade him, with his immense encampment, or encampments, to "*walk through the length of it, and the breadth of it*," and survey it all, the land which his newly-found God had given to him,—as in fact he did with perfect freedom, without incommoding anybody; so sparsely peopled, that when the worldly-minded Lot, whose substance also was so great that their respective encampments could not, or would not, live in peace together (and therefore he preferred the society and fellowship of debased pagans to the altar of his godly uncle, in whom all the families of the earth were to be blessed), Abraham could generously bid him to lift up his eyes from the top of the mountain-range back of Bethel and view the whole land, and choose what part he liked best, saying: "*If thou wilt take to the left hand I will take to the right; or if thou take the right hand, I will take the left*" (Gen. 13:9); so sparsely peopled, that one hundred years later, Abimelech, king of the war-like Philistines of that day, could with some show of reason, if not of truth, say to Isaac: "*Go from us, for thou art much mightier than we!*"—Gen. 26:16.

Now, this is written history, inspired written history; and is it believable by Christian men, to whom God has given the spirit of "*little children*," to believe unquestioningly whatever he tells them, that this goodly land, emptied and drowned out by the waters of Noah's flood, "*a land flowing with milk and honey*," though lying at the very door of Egypt, was still thus empty of inhabitants for a period of 2,000, 3,000 or 4,000 years after Egypt had become great in art, letters, riches, civilization, population and power. I freely confess that I am not well posted in the recently discovered and as yet but partially deciphered facts of ancient Egyptian history, and in this regard may be esteemed as far behind the times; and therefore I ask of those who have a better right to know, how much of all these supposed discoveries and these dates are reliable and true?

For my own part, I have more confidence in Moses and the prophets than in all the monuments of Egypt, read and unread. It is easier for me to believe that these men are mistaken, that "*much learning has made them mad*," turned their heads, or that prejudice against inspired Scripture has warped their judgment, than to believe that the Bible record is untrue. I have far more confidence in the facts of Scripture history than in all the supposed "*findings*" of infidel or skeptical Egyptologists. I believe the Bible as it reads, and had rather pass for a fool all my days and be accounted wise in the day of judgment, than be accounted the wisest man in or out of Germany now and pass for a fool then!

REPLY TO A CHRISTADELPHIAN

Melbourne, December 21, 1905.

Dear Brother Russell:

Having had occasion several times of late to write to Christadelphian enquirers, I am sending herewith an extract from the latest, and copy of reply to it. If something on this subject could appear in ZION'S WATCH TOWER might prove interesting, and would at least save writing it in a letter.

With much love in the Lord,

Yours faithfully, in Him, E. C. HENNINGES.

Dear Sirs:—We are exhorted to "*try the spirits, whether they be of God*," and this test I have carried out with your paper and its teaching, and have found it wanting in the necessary speaking according to the law and the testimony (Isaiah 8:20), so can only conclude that there is no light in it. You are right and scriptural in your contentions that man has not an immortal soul, and "*the dead know not anything*;" but contending that all will be raised, you teach a thing pleasing to the "*flesh*," no doubt, but not in accord with truth.

When quoting 1 Cor. 15:22, consider that altho we are all in Adam by descent, a way is prescribed whereby we may come into Christ, or put on Christ; hence all are not in Christ. Altho what Paul writes to Timothy about Christ dying for all is also true, the death will not benefit those who do not come into Christ in the way laid down. Can you in the light of your teaching explain the following, which show that, at any rate, some will not be raised, thus upsetting your pleasant theory?—Isaiah 26:13, 14; Jeremiah 51:39, 57; Proverbs 21:16; Psalm 49:12, 20. And Ephesians 4:17, 18 shows that ignorance alienates from God.

The Bible is the source of all wisdom, and is the basis of all that is true, so I hope that you will carefully examine the above, and will be pleased to receive a reply, if you deem this worthy of one.

Yours sincerely, TASMANIA.

REPLY

Dear Sir:—We are very sorry that the explanations of the Word given in the columns of ZION'S WATCH TOWER have not appealed to you more strongly than they seem to have done. Yet we are glad that you have not condemned it without having looked at it at least a little. Possibly you would have found more to commend, had you looked further.

Experience shows that in teaching the raising of all (both just and unjust), we are not giving out something that is pleasing to the "flesh." The "flesh" prefers to believe that it has a soul that lives while the body is dead, which of course makes the resurrection unnecessary, so that this doctrine is no more acceptable now than it was in the days of the apostles, who preached Jesus and the resurrection.

So far as you have expressed yourself on 1 Cor. 15:22, we are quite in harmony, for we also believe that no one will be made alive, except he have come into Christ in the ways of faith and obedience appointed thereto. The difference between us in this connection would be more in that we understand the Scriptures to teach that all will have an opportunity to come into Christ, and that none will be destroyed in the second death without having had this opportunity, and that if some have died on account of Adamic death before the "day" appointed in God's plan for the bringing of the blessing to all the families of the earth by the Seed of Abraham (Christ and his joint-heirs), and without the enlightenment that God purposes to give to every man (John 1:19; 1 Tim. 2:4), such will be waked up out of their sleep, will be enlightened, and will be confronted with the responsibility of choosing either to obey the Great Prophet and live, or to disobey him and perish; whereas your idea seems to be that those who have died in ignorance of the "Only Name," as most of our race have done, will never hear about him and his love for them, which would be contrary to the above Scriptures and many others, and would be a very great pity, as well.

If we understand your idea correctly, it would represent the Lord as having given a price sufficient to redeem the whole race, from Adam onward, yet getting an opportunity to bless only about one in a hundred of all those for whom he gave a sufficient price. (1 John 2:2.) You would not be very well pleased with the result of a transaction which would return you 1 pound for every 100 pounds; is it any more reasonable to suppose that the Redeemer of the world should be satisfied with the opportunity to bless only one soul, when by the investment of his entire capital (himself—1 Tim. 2:6) he purchased with a price the right to bless a hundred? Would not such an outcome of the great transaction be a reflection on the justice of the Almighty, to whom the price was paid? Could the first portion of Isaiah 53:11 in such a case be said to be accomplished?

We are quite prepared to believe that some now dead will never be raised, namely, those who have wilfully sinned against the sufficient enlightenment of the truth. (Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26-31.) And in so far as these conditions are met by those described in the references you cite from Isaiah, Jeremiah, Proverbs and Psalms, we are bound to believe that they belong to the class that will not be raised. But there were not many in Old Testament times (if there was one) that could fulfill the conditions mentioned in Hebrews, and even since Pentecost the greater part of the world has been left in so much darkness that for them to have come under these conditions has been impossible. A certain

amount of enlightenment is necessary, and this has been withheld from the world as a whole.

Verse 14 of Psalm 49 seems to show that it is necessary to seek some interpretation of verse 19 that will not cause the inspired writer to be saying that they shall never be brought back from the dead; for how could the upright have dominion over non-existent persons? Does not the Psalmist rather seem to be saying that those who persist in the foolish ways of the world shall be allowed to go on so, without being enlightened concerning a better way? They shall never see light before death overtakes them; but who can say that they will not see a very great light when the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning? You will see that this is harmonious with all the rest of the Psalm, and with other Scriptures already mentioned; and should it not be the aim of every Bible student so to interpret the Word that all the parts harmonize, and no plain statement need be ignored?

Proverbs 21:16 seems to express exactly the sentiment elaborated in Hebrews. Observe that this is telling about the man who wanders out of the way of understanding. It refers, therefore to one who has been enlightened; and whatever it may say about him, it teaches nothing concerning those who have never been in the way of understanding, which has been the condition of most of the race.

In Jeremiah 51:39, 57, the word "perpetual" is translated from the Hebrew word "olam." Now, I doubt not that you have often explained to those not so far enlightened that this Hebrew word does not in itself mean "endless," and quite likely you have cited references supporting this assertion. Yet you insist on applying an extreme definition of it in the case of these sleepers. Why do you do this?

The word "olam" seems rather to signify "lasting" or "enduring," and the length of the duration must be determined by the context, or by other Scriptures. That it comes short of meaning "endless," is readily seen by reference to the Scriptures, and it is instructive to place in parallel columns some texts which describe certain things as "olam," with other texts which tell of the doing away of the same.

"OLAM" ENDED

"OLAM"

Exodus 29:9.

Here the Aaronic priesthood is "olam."

Jeremiah 25:9.

Here the seventy years of desolation are "olam."

Jeremiah 51:39, 57.

The "olam" sleepers.

Hebrews 7:12.

Here the Aaronic priesthood is supplanted by the Melchisedec order.

Jeremiah 32:15.

Here the "olam" desolation is ended.

Isaiah 25:7; Ezekiel 37:12-14 with 16:53, 55, 61-63; Jeremiah 48:47; 49:6, 39; Psalm 86:9; Phil. 2:10; Acts 3:24. "Olam" sleepers awake.

The "perpetual" sleep of the Babylonian desolators of Palestine has not been interrupted as yet, but it is to be, for "he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations." That is to say, "He will swallow up death in victory." They have slept long; but they shall be waked up in due time, and with the Assyrians, Egyptians and Israelites (Isaiah 19:24, 25), with the Moabites, Ammonites and Elamites (Jeremiah 48:47; 49:6, 39), with the Samaritans and with the Sodomites (Ezekiel 16:53, 55) and all the nations whom God has made, shall come and worship (Psalm 86:9), and with all the families of the earth shall receive the blessing through the promised "Seed," which is the Christ. (Galatians 3:8, 16, 29.) Yea, at the name of Jesus every individual knee shall bow, whether it be on the earth or under the earth; and surely those under the earth will need to hear his voice and come forth, and will need instruction before they can acknowledge the Lord Jesus, and confess to the glory of God the Father that he is the Lord. Surely, there is nothing in Jeremiah 51:39, 57 that conflicts with the grand testimony of all God's holy prophets, Jeremiah included, concerning the "Times of Restitution of All Things."

The "lords" in Isaiah 26:13, 14 we understand to mean the various nations and systems that have oppressed Israel. Some of these are dead, and the remainder will die, and as institutions they shall not rise; but this in no way antagonizes the thought that the individuals shall be brought

back from death. How else shall this passage be understood in harmony with the Scriptures above cited?

Without doubt, ignorance has alienated and does alienate (as we are told in Ephesians 4:17, 18) men from the life of God; but when, under the kingdom, the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, all will learn to know God, and many, we trust, will gladly obey him, and will no longer be alienated, but will become members of his family. Indeed, the same Apostle assures us that the whole creation is groaning and travailing in pain, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God, and shall then be delivered

from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."—Romans 8:21.

We hope, dear sir, that you will look further into the publications recommended, and particularly that you will carefully and prayerfully study the volume entitled, "The Divine Plan of the Ages." It will be a pleasure to lend it to you, if considerations of the small price stand in your way.

Yours in the Redeemer's service,

E. C. HENNINGES.

THE WHEELING ONE-DAY CONVENTION

The gathering at Wheeling, W. Va., on Sunday, February 11, was a most interesting one, and will long be remembered by many of the dear friends. About 200 attended the convention from outside points, apparently much to the joy of the little class at Wheeling. Their loving interest was heartily reciprocated by the Wheeling friends, who entertained the entire company at dinner. The morning session opened at 10 o'clock, and for an hour we heard splendid testimonies from various quarters, giving thanks to God for the light now shining upon the pathway of his people and expressing determination to press onward in the good way, and hope and faith and joy in respect to the precious promise of the crown of glory at the end of life's journey.

Promptly at 11 o'clock Brother Russell addressed the meeting, taking as the text for his discourse the word of the Lord to the Prophet Isaiah (29:13), "Their fear toward me is taught by the precepts of men." Many of you have the report of the discourse through the daily press. For the benefit of others we would remark that he showed the proper fear in contrast with that which is improper—the fear of the Lord, the beginning of wisdom, in contrast with the fears inspired by superstition, which are the beginning of folly and trouble. Proceeding, he showed how perfect love casts out fear from the hearts of the Lord's people, and that the receiving of the love and the dispelling of the fear are proportionate and gradual, so that those who have most fully received of the grace of God have most fully lost the fear of man that bringeth a snare and the superstitious fears which cause so much torment in the world, but that proportionately they still have the reverence of the Lord and more than ever realize the meaning of the Apostle's words, "Let us fear lest a promise being left us

of entering into his rest any of us should seem to come short of it."—Heb. 4:1.

The afternoon meeting was in the fine new "Court Theatre." The dear friends had been both wise and energetic in the matter of advertising: cards for the windows, posters for the street cars and small cards for distribution amongst the friends, combined with liberal newspaper advertising, made the meeting very widely known. As a result the Opera House, seating 1,500, was crowded, and about 400 stood throughout the service and probably five or six hundred were unable to gain admittance, the doors of the theatre being locked by the management for fear of accident. The topic was our cure for infidelity—"To Hell and Back." The large audience gave excellent attention and we have every reason to hope that at least some of the number had hearing ears of the heart as well as of the head. The gathering apparently represented the most intelligent people of the city and was probably two-thirds men. Some one suggested that all the churches of Wheeling at all their services on Sunday had not as many men present.

It is for us to proclaim the good tidings to those who manifest any disposition to hear: we know not, however, in which it will prosper. It is far from our thought that the truth will ever become popular with the world during this Gospel age. We can, however, rejoice that the opportunity for hearing, the opportunity for getting rid of some of the smoke and confusion of the "dark ages" is reaching out amongst intelligent people in every direction. The testimony is being given them, whether they accept or reject it, showing the divine justice, wisdom, love and power, that the Bible is the foundation for this conception of the divine character, and that the fallacies of superstition came from the "dark ages" and not from God's Book.

CAPERNAUM EXALTED TO HEAVEN

Mark 1:21-34.—FEBRUARY 18.

Golden Text:—"He healed many of their sick."

Our Lord declared of Capernaum that having been exalted to heaven it should be brought down to hell (Matt. 11:23.) Our lesson tells us how it was exalted to heaven—that great mercies and blessings and privileges were accorded to its people early in our Lord's ministry of healing. Nevertheless few there accepted him as Messiah, and, as he predicted, the city was brought down to hell—not to a place of burning or torture, but to hades, a grave condition, a death condition. The city so completely disappeared that its location is not definitely known now. A certain pile of stones is credited with being its former site.

Capernaum was on the Lake of Galilee, near the scene of the miraculous draught of fishes noted in our previous lesson. On the next Sabbath day, Jesus, accompanied by the four fishermen who had left all to become his disciples, entered into the synagogue at Capernaum. Jewish synagogues were very liberally governed, and afforded an opportunity for nearly any one of reverent manner to present his views respecting the law and the prophets. Our Lord availed himself of the opportunity and taught the people, who were astonished at his doctrine, his teachings. They were accustomed to hearing the scribes and Pharisees haggle over the Scriptures, guessing and confusing their meaning and generally mystifying them, but Jesus taught as a master who thoroughly understood his subject—"as one having authority."

True, our Lord had come down from heaven and had knowledge of things of which others were ignorant; but it was not respecting these that he taught, we may be sure from his remark to Nicodemus, "If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how could you believe if I told you of heavenly things?" On the contrary, our Lord's

discourses were along the lines of divine revelation—the law and the prophets, and the fulfilment of these. This is clearly indicated by his declaration, "I speak not for myself; but the Father which sent me he hath given me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak." (John 12:49.) Again he said, "My teaching is not mine, but his that sent me."—John 7:16.

We pause here to remark that the teachings of all the Lord's representatives should be along this same line—not human speculations and philosophies, but the Word of God—"He that hath a dream let him tell a dream, but he that hath my Word let him speak my Word." (Jer. 23:28.) "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word it is because they have no light in them." (Isa. 8:20.) "Teach the Word, be instant in season," and even when inconvenient to yourself. (2 Tim. 4:2.) "The Word of God is powerful and sharper than a two-edged sword." (Heb. 4:12.) "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy Word is truth." (John 17:17.) "They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus," and learned of him. (Acts 5:13.) Thus it is that those who are faithful and loyal to the Lord and the word of his testimony speak not vaguely and indefinitely to the world, but declare the message of God, the "good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people," "in due time."

"I KNOW THEE WHO THOU ART"

Whilst Jesus was speaking, or probably at the conclusion of his discourse, the congregation in the synagogue was startled by the words, "Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God." The speaker was a demoniac; today he would be called a crazy man, and would be confined in an asylum.

We would not say that all insanity is demonism—that all insane persons are possessed of evil spirits, as in the case under review. Quite evidently there are cases in which the brain is diseased, but we believe that fully one-half or more of all those who are dealt with as insane are cases of demoniacal possession—"obsession."

As we have shown in other writings, the evil spirits or demons who thus obsess humanity were once angels—"those angels which kept not their first estate" (Jude 1:6), but who in the days of Noah fell from divine favor through sin, and have since been under chains of darkness pending the judgment of the great day, the Millennial day, when the Christ—Jesus and the church in glory—shall not only grant a trial or judgment to man but also to those fallen angels. (1 Cor. 6:3.) Meantime their endeavors to communicate with humanity, and to obtain control over them through the submission of their wills, seems to be incessant. Throughout the Scriptures, both in the Old and New Testaments, all who reverence God are warned against having anything whatever to do with mediums, seances and every form of spirit communications as being of these demons—satanic. It is our duty to reiterate this, because these influences are more active today than ever before, and because the Scriptures show that they will be increasingly active and powerful in the near future as a part of the great trial coming upon all Christendom in this our day. We learn that in Australia Spiritism is much more advanced and more powerful than in either Europe or America, but it is making rapid strides everywhere.

The demon of our lesson seems to have had the thought that at the coming of Messiah all evil was to be abolished and destroyed. One account says, "Art thou come to destroy us before the time?" as though the demons had some information or premonition that the time for the manifestation of power through Messiah was still future. Another Scripture represents an evil spirit as crying out, "Art thou come to torment us?" The word for torment in that case signifies hasten, punish. We may be sure the inspired writers up to that time had not indicated the nature of the punishment that would be inflicted upon the fallen angels, and that the latter merely surmised that it would be their destruction.

The Apostle Peter seems to imply that when the fallen spirits witnessed our Lord's death as the sin offering, and his resurrection with divine power, they realized a love of God and a power of God on behalf of humanity that they had not previously appreciated, and the thought of God's mercy to come in due time to men gave ground to some of them for hoping also that in due time the repentant ones of their number might be the recipients of a share in divine mercy through Christ. And this indeed we know is a part of the divine program—for not only fallen men but also fallen angels are to be judged or tried at his appearing and kingdom.—1 Cor. 6:3.

Our Lord commanded the demon to leave the man—to give up his hold upon his mind and body. The demon was powerless to resist the authority vested in Jesus, but was not hindered from causing the man considerable torture in going from him. Luke says (4:35) the demon threw the man down in the midst of the crowd—thus and in every way the malignity of these evil spirits is manifested. There are no such obsessions or possessions by holy spirits. God recognizes the individuality of each member of the race and does not intrude upon it, nor do the holiest angels thus intrude. God through his holy Spirit operates not as do the demons, to the overthrow of reason and the subjugation of the will, but on the contrary operates only in accord with reason and the will. The fully consecrated believer in Jesus may receive of the holy Spirit, and this more and more abundantly as he comes into glorious touch and relationship to the Lord in thought and word and conduct. But any neglect of the divine teachings or principles in the exercise of self-will in opposition to the recognized will of God, is sure to that extent to quench the spirit of holiness, the spirit of a sound mind, the Spirit of God, which is in no wise forced upon us, but must be entertained, must be held on to, must be desired if it would be retained and increased.

AMAZED AT THE TEACHING

No doubt in our Lord's teachings he had explained the cause of sin and sorrow and pain and death—that these were the results of original disobedience, the curse, and that in God's due time and way this curse would be lifted from the world, evil spirits would no longer have power and au-

thority to deceive and infest, and sickness and pain and death would all be wiped out in the glorious morning of blessing which God has promised through the Messiah. These astounding teachings, so much more clear and distinct than anything they had ever heard from their scribes, and so full of inspiration and hope, when backed by the demonstrations of the Lord's power over the evil spirits, caused all the people astonishment. They sufficiently realized that the one who had been teaching upon their seashore was a great teacher, a great prophet, if not the Messiah himself.

Although more than a year had elapsed since Jesus began his ministry, although the miracle of Cana of Galilee was in the past, and although he had taught to a considerable extent in that region, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," yet this seems to have been the first illustration of our Lord's miraculous power over disease and evil spirits. Otherwise the people of that city who had heard Jesus' teaching would not have been so astonished. We may be sure that the four fishermen who had left all to be his disciples were less surprised than the others, because of their knowledge of the increase of the wine at Cana, and their knowledge also of the miraculous draught of fishes a few days previous to this casting out of the demon.

Leaving the synagogue, Jesus and the four disciples went to Peter's home, where his mother-in-law lay sick of a fever. They entreated Jesus on her behalf (Luke 4:38), and he healed her. Evidently the casting out of the demon suggested to the minds of the disciples the power of our Lord to heal diseases, otherwise they would have entreated the Lord to heal the woman before going into the synagogue. Our Lord took the woman by the hand and raised her up, and immediately the fever left her. Other than this she was not weak and enervated, as fever patients usually are when the fever is stopped. On the contrary, she had her wonted strength, and was able at once to minister to the guests of the home, to serve them with dinner, etc.

"HIMSELF TOOK OUR INFIRMITIES"

At even, at sunset, not only because it was the close of the day, but because according to the Jewish custom the Sabbath ending at sunset made it in the eyes of the people the more proper time, they brought to Jesus the sick and those possessed with devils that he might relieve them. He did this, expending in the service his own vitality, we may be sure. This much is not only intimated by the Apostle's declaration that himself bore our infirmities and carried our sorrows, but it is directly stated in connection with one of his healings that "virtue [vitality, power, strength] went out of him and healed them all." (Matt. 8:17; Luke 6:19.) Thus our Lord fulfilled his covenant of consecration and began to lay down his life for others. The using of strength for the assisting of others continued to the end of his ministry, when through non-resistance, submission to the Father's will, he permitted himself to be crucified for sinners, the just for the unjust, that he might redeem us with his blood, his sacrificed life.

The account says, "He suffered not the devils to speak because they knew him." How evident it is, not only from this statement but also from the case in which Paul rebuked the damsel who cried, "These are the servants of the Most High God, which show unto us the way of eternal life"—how evident it is that the Lord does not desire the testimony of devils respecting himself or his plan. The same is true of all the unregenerate. The Word of the Lord is to such, "What hast thou to do to take my word into thy mouth? seeing thou hatest instruction and castest my words behind thee." (Psa. 50:17.) It is the special privilege of those who are the Lord's consecrated ones to be his ambassadors, his mouthpieces—it is a special honor conferred upon such; hence the declaration again, "None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand."—Dan. 12:10.

Only those wise toward God and seeking to live in harmony with his will may be expected to have clear discernment of the true plan of God; all others will be confused and in more or less of darkness. It is in harmony with this that the prophet declares respecting the entire body of Christ, the Anointed, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me because he hath anointed me to preach the good tidings." None are to be considered teachers of God's message except they have the anointing, and all who have the anointing, to the extent that they possess it, are privileged to be representatives and mouthpieces of the Lord according to their opportunities and willingness under the reasonable limitations of the Word.

The next morning the multitudes, enthused with the thought that they had a great teacher and healer in their midst, sought Jesus again, but he had departed early into a wilderness place, saying that he must preach the Gospel in other cities also—he must be about his Father's business, he must attend to the necessities and interests of the entire flock. Evidently our Lord's intention was to merely give such evidences of divine favor as would convince all who were Israelites indeed respecting his true character and work as the Father's representative, as the Messiah. Hence he would leave after giving these miraculous tokens—leave, that those who were not in a proper condition of heart might forget, might lose their interest, might cool their ardor, while only the Israelites indeed, waiting for the consolation of God promised through the law and the prophets, would continue to watch and hope and wait and pray for the kingdom he had announced.

So it is in every case: the Lord is seeking only the elect class, those who worship him in spirit and in truth; he seeks not the multitude, their time is not yet. In due time all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and the knowledge of the Lord shall be granted to every member of the race, but now it is only for the special class whom the Lord is seeking to be members of the bride, the Lamb's wife.

HE HEALED MANY

While our Lord undoubtedly healed many diseased ones during the two years and a quarter following this lesson, we have no thought that he healed all the sick of Palestine. His mission was not to heal the sick but to preach the gospel. The healing of the sick was merely incidental, to attract the attention, to assist the faith, to point him out as the finger of God. For instance, we remember the cure of the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, where there were many sick folk, and he alone of them all was healed. (John 5:1-9.) The account would seem to imply that many if not all the sick at Capernaum were healed, but it was a little city, and, besides, it was granted, we are told, wonderful blessings and privileges and opportunities and favors above other cities—it was exalted up to heaven in point of privileges, blessings and opportunities, and this largely through so general a healing of its sick and devil possessed ones.

"THESE SIGNS SHALL FOLLOW"

Many in studying this lesson will doubtless call to mind the arguments of some who claim that all of the Lord's people who truly trust him should heal each other through prayer and should never be sick. Many who thus argue quote these words, "These signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues, they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover."—Mark 16:17, 18.

These dear friends should note two things: (1) That these words, and indeed all of the sixteenth chapter of Mark from the ninth verse to its close, are not found in the old manuscripts of the Bible, and are recognized as being additions to what Mark wrote, and hence wholly without inspired authority. All scholars know this, and many who quote these words we would suppose are intelligent enough to have this knowledge. Why then do they quote them as Scripture when they know they are not Scripture?

(2) These words are not true of the Lord's followers,

and those who quote them as applicable show that they do not believe them. They will not take up serpents, they fear to drink deadly things, they cannot cast out devils, nor can they all heal the sick by laying on their hands.

Our Lord's miracles not only served as an instruction to the people but also typified or illustrated the power which he ultimately will use on a higher and grander scale in the blessing of all the families of the earth. He did not use his power, so far as the record shows, upon any of his followers, his disciples. Their call implied that they would follow in his steps, and instead of seeking restitution and recovery of physical health they would seek to lay down their lives for their brethren in the service of the Truth. Whoever has got the idea that the Lord's followers are called to get physical health and freedom from trials and difficulties, aches, pains and sorrows, has gotten the wrong thought. True, godly living and a heart at peace with the Lord are very conducive to physical health, but it is also true that to be instant in season and out of season in the service of the King will mean a considerable amount of wear and tear, physically, and imply a measure of physical discomfort at times, and this injury in one way or another should be considered as a part of our sacrifice, a part of the "all things" of our experience which God is able to overrule to our profit.

Very many indeed of the Lord's people have received most wonderful blessings at his hands under the chastening rod of affliction, sickness. Thus an evil thing, an element of the curse, has in many instances been overruled for good to those who loved the Lord and were properly exercised by their experiences. True, there is no sickness in heaven, and there will be no sickness on earth after the Millennial age shall have fully rolled away the curse and brought in restitution and perfection to those who will accept them on God's terms of obedience and shall have destroyed all other members of the human race. But that time has not yet come; we are still walking not by sight but by faith; we still have the weaknesses, mental, moral and physical, which came to us as our share of the general fall. The Lord may grant us special immunities or special refreshment according to his wisdom, according to his knowledge of the necessity of the work he would have us do, but it is not for us to attempt to withdraw our sacrifice by asking for earthly favors and immunities. Rather we are to ask for the spiritual blessings, realizing that the Father is more willing to give the holy Spirit to his children than are earthly perents to give earthly good things to theirs.

The giving to us of the holy Spirit will generally imply lessons in patience, meekness and in love development through sufferings and trials, moral or physical. The obedient child of God, developed through the knowledge of the Word and the possession of its spirit, will delight to acknowledge the Lord's wisdom and to trust him for such blessings of a temporal kind as may seem to him best. Our special advantages are of a spiritual kind, which did not begin at Capernaum or at all during our Lord's ministry, but on the contrary began at Pentecost after he had ascended on high and received of the Father his reward and the authority to endue his followers with the spirit of begetting to the new nature.

Let us not seek for the loaves and fishes and physical healing, for after all these things do the Gentiles seek; but let us seek the spiritual health, strength and vigor, and all temporal things shall be added unto us according to divine wisdom and love.

THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS

Mark 2:1-12.—FEBRUARY 25.

Golden Text—"The Son of man has power on earth to forgive sins."

It was but a short time after the incidents of our last lesson and our Lord's subsequent preaching to other cities of Galilee that he returned to Capernaum, which was now his home city, for Matthew informs us that leaving Nazareth he came and dwelt in Capernaum. (Matt. 4:13.) The people heard that he was at home, and a crowd assembled at the house. The houses of the middle classes of that time are understood to have been usually of one room only, in size about 20x40 feet, with a flat roof formed by heavy timbers about two feet apart, on which were placed slabs of either wood or stone, the whole being covered with earth or sod closely rolled. The roof was usually accessible by an outside stairway and was often used as a summer sleeping place.

To the crowd of his fellow-citizens—who had but recently

awakened to the fact that Jesus was a great prophet, endued with miraculous powers—the Lord was discoursing, doubtless respecting the kingdom of God long promised, and which he proclaimed to be nigh, even at the door, if the people were willing to receive the message and its blessing. At this juncture four men, bearing on a litter a young man paralyzed and utterly helpless, approached the house with a view to having the sick one healed. His helpless condition probably hindered the ailing one from applying to Jesus on the day when so many of the sick at Capernaum were cured. Now he had found friends and helpers and had come within sound of the Master's voice, yet was unable to gain access to his presence because of the crowd who were unwilling to make way for him.

But the faith which had brought him thus far insisted

that some way of presenting his case before Jesus would be found. Finally he was carried to the roof of the house the earthy covering was dug away from a portion, the slab lifted, and by improvised ropes he was let down into the very presence of Jesus. He must have had a strong faith not only in the Lord's power to heal but also in his gentleness and goodness, that so far from resenting the rude intrusion he would have patience and realize his deep necessity.

And so it was: instead of finding fault, threatening them with arrest, accusing them of rudeness, etc., our Lord was so pleased with the faith manifested that he overlooked the intrusion entirely and greeted his uninvited guest most graciously, saying, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee." Perhaps the young man was thinking less of his sins and their forgiveness than of his hope for recovery, but in any event our Lord put the most important thing foremost. He was primarily the sin-bearer and teacher, his work of healing being a secondary one at the time, a mere exercise, so as to emphasize the lessons given.

WISE AND UNWISE ALERTNESS

The people present were alert to notice everything that Jesus did and said, and amongst them were some of the learned, the Scribes, who were well informed respecting the law and looked up to as authorities by the masses. These with the others had been attracted by the wonderful miracles and teachings of Jesus and they were watching his words and deeds. Here they thought they had found a flaw—that Jesus was arrogating to himself a power and authority which could belong to God alone. Indeed we may suppose that it was partly to start this very line of reasoning that our Lord expressed himself as he did. Then, reading their hearts, he answered their queries, saying, "Which is the easier for you to believe, that I am able to forgive sins or that I could heal this man of the result of his sins? But to prove my power to forgive the sin I will perform the cure, and its performance will testify that I have not blasphemed; that I have not arrogated to myself authority which is not properly in my control; that I am not misrepresenting the Father when I declare that I am his special agent and representative." Then Jesus said to the paralyzed man, "Arise, take up thy couch and go to thy home!"

When the man did arise and carried forth his stretcher on which he had lain the people were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything of the like before." Luke adds that they said, "We have seen strange things today." They had heard the Messiah explain about his kingdom and declare his power to forgive sins and demonstrate that power by a miracle. How could they help but wish that the kingdom of God might immediately be established, that divine favor might reach the whole world and increase in restitution blessings until there should be no more sickness, no more pain, no more dying, no more crying, no more sin, no more death. However, a particular work must be accomplished before the kingdom could be set up and begin its restitution work: first the elect of God, a little flock, the bride of Christ, must be selected. Palestine and the favored nation did not supply a sufficient number to fulfil the divine arrangement, and hence after the selection of all the Israelites indeed the favor of God turned from natural Israel to the Gentiles, to gather out of them a sufficient number to complete the very elect.

Our hope, our confidence is that this election is very nearly accomplished; that soon the second coming of Christ will bring forth his church in the first resurrection to glory, honor and immortality and joint-heirship with him in the kingdom, and that subsequently the restitution blessings of the kingdom will go forth to the natural seed of Abraham, yea, unto all the families of the earth.

Sin and its forgiveness may be considered the essence of this lesson: to this subject, therefore, we turn our attention.

Not only is sin generally common to the world of mankind, as the Scriptures abundantly declare and explain, but a consciousness of sin is general. The world in general recognizes what the Bible emphasizes, namely, that all unrighteousness is sin, all imperfection is sin. The Jews under the Law, realizing their inability to keep its requirements, would be bound in all honesty to admit that they were sinners, transgressors of its requirements. Christians, recognizing God's law on a still higher plane, realize still more fully their own blemishes and shortcomings of the perfect law which says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, with all thy mind, with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself." But those who have not the Jewish law nor the Christian law and instruction have nevertheless a sufficiency of conscience, a sufficiency of the original law written in man's

constitution, though largely obliterated through the six thousand years of the fall: by this they realize that they have shortcomings, and, as the Apostle points out, they confess that they are sinners against their ideals of righteousness in that they sometimes attempt to excuse their conduct while at other times they clearly and plainly acknowledge wrong-doing.

The remarkable thing is that our consciousness of sin increases with our education in the school of Christ—increases in proportion as we cease to do evil and learn to do well. Accordingly, the most advanced saint has a clearer discernment of and a greater repugnance for sin than has the most degraded sinner. Thus it is, too, with God, who hates sin and cannot look upon it with allowance. He has placed his bann, his sentence, his edict against it, and declares that it shall be utterly rooted out, and that all intelligently and wilfully in sympathy with it must be considered as part of it and be destroyed with it.

The more we see of sin, the more we realize its contaminating character and destructive tendencies, the more we appreciate the divine justice which on account of sin condemns sin in humanity. (Rom. 8:3.) The more advanced our conceptions of righteousness, truth, holiness, purity, the more we are enabled to appreciate the divine view of sin and to say of the Lord and his sentence against sin and sinners, "True and righteous are thy judgments, O Lord."—Rev. 15:3.

THE OPERATION OF DIVINE MERCY

But the more we come to appreciate divine justice and the righteousness of the sentence of death against our race, the more also we come to appreciate the love and mercy of God toward us, and to rejoice that he was not willing that any should perish, and hence made provision wide enough, high enough, deep enough, that all might turn unto him and live—have everlasting life. This provision of mercy cannot ignore the sin nor can it permit the sinner to ignore it. It is necessary that the redeemed should know, should appreciate, their fallen condition, the justice of their sentence of death, and that their recovery is wholly a matter of divine mercy. Unless they learn this lesson they could never appreciate the divine arrangements and the only terms upon which God could grant them everlasting life—terms of acceptance of God's grace and forgiveness and their obedience to him and his principles of righteousness.

"NONE OTHER NAME GIVEN"

It is to this end that the heavenly Father arranged his plan for the recovery of our race as he reveals it in his Word—a plan by which he extends mercy to all, yet requires all to accept that mercy through Jesus, "through faith in his blood," or not at all. (Rom. 3:25.) This insures that every one coming to the Father must admit that he is a sinner, must admit that he cannot meet the penalty of his own sin and live, must admit that his salvation is purely of divine mercy through Christ; and it insures that the terms and conditions which Jesus the Redeemer will establish as the Mediator between God and sinners must be thoroughly understood and accepted and complied with. He proposes to help back to perfection and to full fellowship with the Father all who sincerely repent of sin and will use their best endeavors under his guidance, instruction and assistance to return to God. To such and to such alone will perfection be granted. Such alone will attain the everlasting life through the assistance as well as through the redemption of him who bought us with his precious blood.

SINS BLOTTED OUT

It is well that we mark a wide distinction between the blotting out of sin, which the Scriptures assure us will be accomplished at the second coming of Christ, and the forgiveness of sins which may be enjoyed now by all who will exercise the necessary faith and obedience. The blotting out of sins at the second advent of Christ will be applied first of all to the church: not a trace of sin in any sense or degree will remain upon these from the time that they share in the glorious blessings of the first resurrection. In the present time they are actually imperfect, blemished, marked and marred by sin, and continually need the covering of the robe of Christ's righteousness so freely granted to them; but with the resurrection change all the blemishes of sin will be gone. As described by the Apostle, that which was sown in weakness will be raised in power, that sown in dishonor will be raised in glory, that which was sown a natural body will be raised a spiritual body. No longer will they need imputed righteousness, but each will individually be absolutely perfect, absolutely righteous.—1 Cor. 15:42-44.

The blotting out of the world's sins will not be thus instantaneous, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, but will

progress throughout the Millennial age gradually. As each individual recognizes sin and falls in line with the rules of the kingdom he will find himself growing stronger as a reward for his endeavors in the ways of righteousness, the highway of holiness. Day by day, year by year, he will increase in mental, moral and physical development, or failing so to do will, after the abundant opportunities of that time, be cut off in the second death as unworthy of any further opportunities for gaining life eternal through the Redeemer's kingdom. Those who will may avail themselves of the privileges of that time and have their sins entirely blotted out—reach absolute perfection of mind and body by the close of the Millennial age, and then be tested as to their heart loyalty to the principles of righteousness as shown in Revelation 20:10. That final test will be general to the human family: it will correspond to the trial given to Adam in Eden, except that these will have had experience with sin and the fall, and with the recovery and with the reign of righteousness. They will, therefore, all be in a proper attitude to enable them to pass the examination satisfactorily, and any failure so to do will demonstrate that the heart had not come, under all the favorable conditions, into that harmony with God which would be indispensable to eternal life. Such the Scriptures show us will be destroyed with Satan as those who have some elements at least of his disposition.

FORGIVENESS OF SINS

In our lesson the Scribes are represented as reasoning that the only one who could forgive a sin is the one against whom the transgression is committed. If A commit a transgression against B it is not in the power of C to forgive it. B alone has the right to feel offended and he alone can forgive. The Scribes were reasoning along correct lines: while we do as individuals transgress the rights and liberties of each other at times and thus sin against one another and need to have one another's forgiveness, yet all sin is primarily against God, whose law of righteousness is infringed. All unrighteousness is sin—against God, against his laws. He alone sets the standard of right and wrong by which his creatures are to be measured or judged and he is the Judge. How, then,

COULD JESUS FORGIVE SINS?

We answer that our Creator had so fixed the matter of sin and its penalty that Jesus was the only one who could forgive sins—or the heavenly Father through him. The divine arrangement was so fixed that the Father had even put out of his own hands the power to forgive sins, because he had fixed a positive, absolute, unchangeable penalty against sin in the case of Adam and his posterity. He could have done differently: he could have dealt with mankind as he dealt with the angels that fell, and merely put them under some kind of restraints without imposing directly the death sentence. But once the death penalty had been imposed, nothing could alter or annul it. God himself could not change his unchangeable laws.

But that unchangeable sentence against mankind was made by the Creator with full knowledge of how he could, and in due time, would negative or nullify the sentence, not by withdrawing it but by meeting its requirements through a Redeemer. Thus it was that in the divine plan our Lord Jesus was the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. In other words God had in mind the plan of redemption before he imposed the death sentence which made necessary that redemption.

DIVINE FAVOR EARLY MANIFESTED

It may be urged that God manifested his favor to Abraham and others before our Lord Jesus came into the world and presented man's ransom price. We reply that this is so, that divine favor was manifested, but that its manifestation was based upon the divine intention that in due time the ransom for sinners would be paid. But even then the favor granted was not the blotting out of sins. No! that could not have been done prior to the ransom, and is to be done by God through the Redeemer glorified. All the ancient worthies could possibly have was such measure of divine favor as their faith in God would justify, and the only favors which God could grant to them would be such as his intentions through the Redeemer would make reasonable.

SIN UNDER MOSES' LAW

Under the Law Covenant God arranged with the nation of Israel a certain kind and degree of forgiveness and reconciliation through Moses, the mediator of that covenant. Under these arrangements the sin offerings year by year made a picture, a type, an illustration of the coming blessings under the New Covenant and its Mediator, the Christ. Israel as a nation enjoyed God's favor to a limited extent through faith, as did the patriarchs, but neither did they have a blotting out of sins. On the contrary, the Apostle points out that it is evident that Israel's sacrifices and sin offerings never really took away sin, but were merely typical of better sacrifices through which sin will actually be cancelled and ultimately blotted out.—Heb. 10:1-4; Acts 3:19.

THE MEASURE OF JESUS' FORGIVENESS

If the heavenly Father were bound by his own law and could not blot out sins without the payment of the ransom price, could our Lord Jesus do so? Had he greater power in this respect than the Father? We answer, No! His words to the paralyzed man in this lesson did not refer to a blotting out of man's sins, but merely to such a forgiveness of sins as the Father had already extended to Abraham and others in the past. When the Lord had uttered the words, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," the man still lay helpless, his sins not blotted out though forgiven; he was still a picture, an illustration of the terrible effects of sin. And our Lord's later words, "Arise, take up thy bed and walk," although in the nature of restitution, were not a blotting out of the man's sins. To have blotted out his sins completely would have meant the lifting of him completely out of all the imperfections of the fall up to the full perfection of a perfect man mentally, morally and physically. Jesus did not do this for him; he merely healed him of a measure of his special difficulty.

Besides, in these words our Lord did not refer to original sin and its death penalty. He was speaking of sins in the plural, the man's own sins additional to his share in father Adam's sin and father Adam's penalty. The man was a Jew, under the Mosaic Covenant. His share in original sin, in common with that of all Jews, was atoned for every year, and on the basis of this atonement he as a Jew had a standing with the Lord, and the Lord's engagement with that people was that under their covenant they should be free from sickness, etc., so long as they were obedient to the Lord. To every Jew, therefore, sickness meant, implied, personal guilt, personal transgression, because the Lord had so covenanted with them, as he had not done with other peoples and nations.

OUR LORD ALREADY SACRIFICED

But even as respects Adamic sin and its penalty our Lord would have had the right to have spoken peace and forgiveness and to have given an assurance of an ultimate blotting out of sins, because although he had not yet finished the work which he came to do, although he had not yet finished the ransom sacrifice, he had begun it. At his baptism he had consecrated his life, had laid down his life, presented it to the Father in sacrifice, and the Father had in a measure accepted it and had signified his acceptance of the contract by giving to our Lord the holy Spirit, the first-fruits of the glorious blessing which he received at his resurrection.

It was by virtue of his already having made this sacrifice, which he fully intended to carry out to the very end, that our Lord was authorized in saying to his believers, "He that hath the Son hath life, he that hath not the Son shall not see life." "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 3:36; 6:54)—that is, he who believes in me and becomes my true, faithful follower may reckon that he has already begotten in him the new life, and that I will assist him and carry him through, so that in the very dawning of the Millennial morning he may have a share in the first resurrection and thus obtain the eternal life under its perfect conditions.

The entire operation of this Gospel age so far as the church is concerned is one of faith—"We walk by faith not by sight." By faith we realize our sins forgiven, by faith we look into the future and believe that in the first resurrection we shall share our Master's glory, honor and immortality. And by faith we are satisfied and rest in hope—yea, actually, we shall be satisfied when we awake in his likeness.—Psalm 17:15.

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