

deliverance, their help must come in another way—by the fall of present institutions and the establishment of the kingdom of God's dear Son in power and great glory, the binding of Satan and the uplifting of all the debased ones and the enlightening of the whole world.

What further evidence do we need that those people, professing to be the chosen people of God, professing to hope for the coming of Messiah and his kingdom, were making such professions only with their lips and that they did not come from the heart? They loved better the ways of sin than the promised ways of righteousness. Our Lord did not force himself upon them—with his disciples he again entered into the ship to leave their shore. The time had not yet come to establish the kingdom by force. That was deferred until the election, the selection of the faithful ones, should be accomplished—the selection of the Israelites indeed from amongst natural Israel, and eventually, by the begetting of the Spirit, from among all nations, peoples, kindreds and tongues, to whom the message of God's love and grace will be sent. Soon the selection will be accomplished and the reign of Messiah begin.

While it would not be true to say that all mankind are possessed of devils, possessed of these evil spirits, these demons, and we thank God that it is not so, yet it would be true to say that through the influence of evil all mankind has become more or less possessed of the spirit of demons, the spirit of selfishness, the spirit of sin, alienation from God. From this standpoint the whole world is slightly insane, some more, some less so.

The Apostle corroborates this thought, saying of those who have accepted Christ and who have received of his Spirit, the new mind, that they have "the spirit of a sound mind." (2 Tim. 1:7). He thus implies that previously they did not have a sound mind, and that the world in general does not have a sound mind, but unsound. The poor man out of whom a legion of devils was cast is an extreme example of all out of whom the spirit of evil is cast through the power of the truth. We are not so bad as he, thank God! No! Nevertheless it was not until we had received the new mind of Christ, not until the old things were done away and all things became new that we really stood at Jesus' feet, clothed and in our right mind. (2 Cor. 5:17). Thank God for the clothing which we have in Christ's robe of righteousness, covering our blemishes and imperfections, the bruises of sin and the injury which we did to ourselves. Thank God that this is stopped, that we can now see things from the better standpoint, from the only true standpoint.

The healed man alone appreciated Jesus of all the people of that country. They wished him to depart, but this poor man entreated the Lord that he might go with him, that he might become one of his disciples. How touching! What a picture we have of those who receive the spirit of a sound mind, who now long to be with the Lord, who now long to be his disciples, to proclaim him to others, who now appreciate him as others do not. As the Apostle declared, "To you, who believe, he is precious." (1 Pet. 2:7). The man may have been fearful of being left lest the demons should take possession of him again, or he may have been ashamed of his previous course in life and of his old associates, and thought to find new ones; but more probably we think he desired to be a witness to the Lord respecting the great blessing which he had received through him.

**"GO TO THY HOME AND THY FRIENDS"**

While Jesus refused the request he did not spurn the conse-

cration, but sent the man back to his home and his friends, saying, "Tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. And he departed and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done to him: and all men did marvel." We know not how many of the people as a result of that preaching ultimately became the Lord's disciples—after Pentecost, after the Spirit dispensation had been ushered in, under the power and guidance of which all the Israelites indeed were found and sealed by the Truth as followers of the Lord. We may reasonably suppose that there was some fruitage of the labor. Indeed our Lord's journey on that occasion seems to have resulted in the conversion of but the one person, the demoniac, his subsequent work there being done through him.

We thank God that the proportion of those possessed by evil spirits is comparatively small, and we thank him also that amongst the whole of unsound minds we and others who have heard his message have been reached by it, reclaimed, and that we have come to the feet of Jesus clothed and in our right minds. Has he not a work for us to do? If we cannot be the apostles to follow his footsteps we can at least follow the example of this one freed from the demons: we can go to our own homes and to our friends and there confess the Lord and his mighty power in us. We can thus sound forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light; we can thus be co-laborers together with God in the ministry of the truth, in the ministry of reconciliation, telling how great things the Lord hath done for us. Moreover, we are glad that he has had compassion on us, forgiven our sins, and, when we consecrated, accepted us and adopted us into the heavenly family and made us partakers of his holy Spirit and commanded us to proclaim the good tidings of his grace.

Truly it would appear that none who have received God's favors thus should receive them in vain—that all so honored should be awakened to newness of life and energy in the service of the Lord. One of the best testimonies we have ever heard as respects the power of Christian living and its influence upon others was from a lady who asked to be remembered in prayer, that she might be enabled to see clearly and to follow the truth. Subsequently we asked her why she had been anxious to see the truth, and her reply was: "I have a sister-in-law who has received this truth, and her course in life since has convinced me that there is a power in the religion of Jesus that I did not previously recognize. For years I have been an agnostic, an unbeliever, and my friends and associates are of this class. I thought there was nothing to religion but merely ignorance and superstition, but when my sister took up with the *MILLENNIAL DAWN* views it made such a great change in her life, all her conduct seemed so transformed, that I said to myself, 'There is a power, there must be truth in the religion of Jesus, for I see it now demonstrated in the life of this woman, and I desire the same for myself.'"

O, that we all might be diligent to be thus faithful stewards of the grace of God, and faithful representatives of our great Redeemer—not only witnessing with our lips, but in all the departments of life testifying that we are now sane, that we have now the spirit of a sound mind, that we love the things that are right and true and noble and good, that we hate and are living in opposition to the things which are sinful and contrary to the mind of the Lord and the ways of righteousness.

## VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

### SADLY CONFUSED TEACHING

The *Christian Evangelist*, in a prominent article entitled, "What is the Soul?" says:

"To man is given the power to create an immortal soul, and father and mother walk hand in hand with God. It is fitting that the halo of love should shine around the mated pair, and that the new home should glow with light from the glory-world, for Eden's morn is dawning again to sweet new souls—souls that are born of man and also born of God."

When our friends of the Christian denomination get sufficiently awake to inquire for a Scripture authority for all religious teaching, the editor of the *Evangelist* and others will criticize what is published much more thoroughly than they do now; and a totally unscriptural article of the kind referred to will not appear in journals claiming "No creed but the Bible."

The idea that God would go into partnership with the

majority of parents who know him not or who are his enemies through wicked works is absurd on the face of it, as well as unscriptural. Worse, it is blasphemy against God! The very idea! That God should be charged with the responsibility of the direct creation of the poor misshapen, diseased little babes, the one-half of which have not vitality enough to reach maturity, is surely the product of a deficient or sadly misdirected reason. Let God be true, though at the risk of making out that many men are liars or foolish. God's Word declares that infants are "born in sin, shapen in iniquity"; and the only exceptions to this rule are the comparatively few children of the sanctified. (1 Cor. 7:14.) That the image of God has largely given place to the image of Satan is manifest in the many who "go astray as soon as they are born" (Psa. 53:3), and respecting some of whom our Lord declared, "Ye are of your father the devil, for his works ye do."—John 8:44.

Alas that we must admit it, but who will deny that

some dogs are far better born than are some of Adam's degenerate race? Aye, some of them with better dispositions, too—more of meekness, gentleness, patience and love; and less of anger, hatred and strife. If God has so arranged his laws of nature that each can bring forth after his own kind, why should not man, the highest of earthly creatures, have the same powers? Why should it be claimed that in man's case God interferences and helps produce the idiotic and mentally and physically unbalanced which constitute the majority of our race? Why should this be urged, not only without Scripture proof but contrary to the Bible's express teachings?

#### THERE IS ALWAYS A REASON

The reason is the desire to prove the immortality of the soul, which centuries of Platonic philosophy has foisted upon the world *as essential to any hope of a future life*. Plato's followers tell us that this wisdom of a heathen poet is implied in the Bible though never stated in it. We answer, to the contrary, that the Bible most explicitly limits immortality to the Father and the Son (1 Tim. 6:16), and holds out to the saints the *hope* of "glory, honor and immortality" at the end of life's race.—Rom. 2:7.

The hope of eternal life, according to the Bible, is not a power in man to live forever, but a power in God to raise man from the dead and to perpetually supply the conditions essential to an everlasting existence. *Death* is the wage or penalty of God's law against sinners: the *death* of Jesus was the ransom for sinners; and the resurrection promised in the Millennial morning is the salvation provided—a salvation from *death*, a raising up from the fallen condition of sin and its penalty to the life and perfection originally lost. "By man death, by man also the resurrection of the dead; for as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive."—1 Cor. 15:21, 22.

Note the inconsistencies involved. (1) For God to interfere with human pro-creation and insert a Platonic "spark of deity" into every idiotic or degenerate babe to make them death-proof would be in direct contradiction to his sentence against the race, "Dying thou shalt die." (2) It would make meaningless our Lord's words, "Ye must be born again" (John 3:7), by implying that man's begetting and God's begetting are simultaneous. (3) If more than 100,000 infants are born each day, and myriads more are begotten that never reach birth, the *Christian Evangelist* must believe in a host of Gods kept busy day and night supervising and assisting in a very unholy and every way quite unsatisfactory work. No wonder intelligent infidels despise such nonsense, and, thinking it is Bible teaching, repudiate the latter. (4) According to this false theory the whole matter of eternal torment is God's responsibility and fault; because if God would but exercise reasonable discretion in bestowing the gift of immortality and not coöperate in the birth of those unfit for everlasting bliss there would be none to torment.

What serious confusion comes from false reasoning, human guessing, contrary to God's Word. We devote some space to this matter, not from opposition to the no doubt well-meaning writer, but because the error is widespread. Yes, we are ashamed to say it, this is the maudlin view of Christendom as a whole. Let us whose eyes the Lord has opened to a clearer, saner, holier view of his divine plan be vigilant and wise and lovingly kind in helping to the light and food now provided who give any evidence of hungering and thirsting after truth.

#### REFORMATION BY SURGERY

The newspapers recount a peculiar case which contains a lesson. A boy of 12 years, Harold Hurley, was about to be sent by his parents to a Reform School, because he was so incorrigible. An officer of the Toledo Juvenile Court noticed a scar on the boy's head, and inquiry developed the fact that it came from a fall when the boy was five years old, and that his incorrigibility dated from about that time. He was sent to a hospital where a surgical operation was

performed, and the pressure of a broken bone was removed from the brain. Gradually the boy returned to his former condition of mind and became obedient. His mother is quoted as saying:—

"Dr. Donnelly states that the pressure of that piece of bone upon the brain had gradually dulled all the higher sensibilities, and if it had gone on Harold would, in time, have become an utter degenerate. No one knows how thankful we are today that our boy has been saved from Lancaster Reform School, where he would have been constantly punished for things for which we now know he would not have been responsible."

It is impossible for us to know what proportion of the morally weak and bad, the wicked, the merciless and the untruthful are to some extent what circumstances and conditions, mental, moral and physical have helped to make them. Yet according to the general view the boy above described would have gone to eternal torment. That is to say, no one would claim that he was *fit for heaven*, and under the general assumption there would have been no other place to put him.

How grandly reasonable is the plan of God, which, while telling us that only a "little flock" of overcomers of the world, the flesh and the devil will go to heaven, tells us also that God has provided that "times of restitution" shall shortly begin, in which all the weak and depraved and ignorant, however unfit for heaven, shall have one full chance of restitution to the full perfection of human nature in the Paradise of God restored under the whole heavens. All of this glorious provision, let us never forget, is in and through the *ransom* paid by our dear Redeemer, who "gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."—1 Tim. 2:6.

#### HELL CUT FROM CREED

FROM THE CHICAGO RECORD-HERALD

Valparaiso, Ind., April 12.—Hell fire and the brimstone griddle have no more terrors for the devout Presbyterians of northwestern Indiana. Simple and painless annihilation has been officially declared to be all that the souls of George Ade's sinful fellow-hoosiers need fear in the hereafter. The experts in salvation have discovered that for more than 1,000 years mankind has been laboring under a delusion about the fate of those who are turned away from the pearly gates of St. Peter.

At the meeting of the Logansport Presbytery, which has just adjourned its spring session in this city, it was decided that the words "eternal torment" and "everlasting punishment" should be stricken from the articles of the creed. "Destruction" was the substitute which the ministers and laymen, representing forty-three congregations in this section of the State, recommended. This action will be submitted for the approval of the general assembly of the denomination, to be held in Des Moines, Iowa, in May.

#### DOGMA NOT AUTHORIZED

Without a dissenting vote the members of the Presbytery expressed their conviction that the word "torment," as implying an unending series of diabolical tortures in flames, conducted under the personal supervision of Lucifer, was not authorized by the Bible. They expressed a conviction that such a dogma tended to retard the development of the Presbyterian faith. It was admitted, however, that this view would be deemed revolutionary by many of the strict followers of John Calvin, and probably would cause much dissension. Many objections have already been made by the conservative elements in the congregations.

Rev. A. C. Beckes, pastor of the First Presbyterian church of this city, said, in commenting upon the step: "Of course our action will have no effect unless the general assembly coincides. That body must approve before the words 'torment' and 'punishment' can be stricken out of the confession of faith. Our vote is simply the expression of forty-three ministers and forty-three laymen of the northwestern counties in Indiana."

## A TIMELY WARNING TO THE CLASSES

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

There is a little matter I thought might be well to mention to you. And that is: A smooth, clever "confidence man" is extensively "working" the truth people, in these parts at least. He has a number of very clever stories and schemes by which he is very successful in gaining the confidence of the unsuspecting and securing good sums of money and other favors. He is well posted about our religious affairs and talks glibly about Brother Russell, the Pilgrim brethren and others; also about conventions, etc. He gave his name here as James

Marshall Stuart of Troy, N. Y. He is short of stature, smooth face, and is easily identified by a badly deformed right eye.

He tried to "work" us but failed. A close study of his countenance made me suspicious, and so I made investigation and found him to be a fraud. As the truth people are generally guileless and easy of entreatment he has a good field, and it makes the matter rather serious where he is entertained, as it affords a good opportunity to rob.

Yours in the best of bonds,

G. B. IMHOFF, Iowa.

## BELOVED, BE OF GOOD CHEER

ZION'S WATCH TOWER'S Editor realizes that his friends far and near have been caused intense pain through the publication of malicious falsehoods respecting him. Few of the papers which published the falsehoods were interested to publish the refutations of the same. Thus we have confirmed the old adage that "A lie will travel around the world before the truth gets its boots on." Under the present reign of "the prince of this world" error, falsehood, slander can be easily circulated—need but to be whispered to travel far and near, aided by willing tongues and pens. Truth and justice, on the contrary, appeal less to the majority of the fallen race, and at the present time are at a discount and disadvantage. The time is coming when He who is the Truth as well as the Way and the Life, will reign, and all these influences pertinent to the curse will be changed. "Behold I make all things new."

The Lord's people differ one from another as did the disciples of old. To any who, like the Apostle Thomas, need further evidences as a basis for continued faith, we say in the Master's words, Stretch hither thy hand: write to us. We will not be offended. Be not faithless, but believing. To the uncharitable, ever willing to believe evil and doubt the pure and good, no answer would be satisfactory. To the majority of the pure in heart, and especially to those who are acquainted with the Editor personally or through his writings, it will probably be all sufficient to state in general terms that the newspaper reports above referred to are unjust slanders which wholly misrepresent him. He assures you now in these few words that, born of Christian parents in relationship to the Lord, he confirmed that relationship by an individual faith and consecration at the age of 15 years: that since then he has endeavored to live in all good conscience toward God and his fellowmen, without exception. His teachings are recognized by those familiar with them as belonging to the very highest plane of Christian ethics; and he hereby assures you all that in all his relationships of life he has diligently sought to live as nearly up to these high Christian ideals as possible, trusting in the merit of the Redeemer for the covering and forgiveness of blemishes which he realizes, as well as of others of which he is ignorant, but which the Lord might see. He believes that not a soul in the world can point to a single act of cruelty or unkindness or injustice or lovelessness on his part toward any of the human family, nor even toward any of the brute creation. His consecration vows to the Lord doubtless did guide his course of conduct somewhat differently from what it otherwise would have been, and in consequence the worldly have misunderstood, misinterpreted him, even as they did the Lord and various of his faithful followers throughout the age.

The Editor's foes have uniformly been those whose ambitions have led them step by step in their opposition. He blames them only partially for the evil they from time to time have sought to do to him and indirectly to the cause he serves and to some extent represents. His conviction is that the great adversary and "wicked spirits in high places" are the real adversaries of the harvest work, who seek to use as many as they can gain control of through envy, or pride, through ambition or vainglory. Our Master forewarned us, saying, "It must needs be that offenses come." The Apostle endorsed the same sentiment when he said, "There must needs be divisions amongst you that the approved may be made manifest." Again, it seems not unreasonable to suppose that the Lord permits reproaches to come upon his cause today, as he did in times past, for the purpose of making the truth unpopular, to the intent that only those who love the truth above all else and who are fully consecrated to its service should be willing to bear the reproaches which the adversary would be permitted to bring against the Lord's cause and those who stand prominently connected with it.

To all such we say, Be of good courage, God hath not cast off his people and never will. The trials and difficulties of the journey will all be understood fully, completely, when we reach the end of the way. Our Father planned it all—the narrow and rugged way by which the Master and his "little flock" of faithful followers shall finally reach the heavenly goal. Then, perfect through sufferings, copies of God's dear Son, they shall share with him in the glorious work of dispensing the blessing of life to all the families of the earth. So high a calling by so gracious a God is worthy of our love and loyalty even unto death. Faithful is he who has called us, who assures us that he will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able and has promised us that "all things shall work together for good to them that love God—the called ones according to his purpose." The Editor sorrows especially because he

is the unwilling agent of suffering to so many of the Lord's dear flock, whereas it has usually been his privilege and endeavor to bestow comfort and to scatter blessings on every hand to the extent of his ability. "If one member suffers all the members suffer with it."

My Dear Brother:—

I notice through the secular press that your enemies have again assailed you. I take this opportunity of extending you my heartfelt sympathy and of assuring you of my unshaken confidence in your integrity and Christian character. Praying that heaven's richest blessings may attend your every step, I am

Your Brother in the Lord (Isa. 54:17),

J. S.—Illinois.

Dear Brother Russell:—

Knowing that the great adversary is just now seeking to injure you in the eyes of them that believe not, and knowing that no tribulation for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous, I take this opportunity of telling you of my deep sympathy and love for you in this hour. I am persuaded that this will neither move you nor any whose hearts are set on things above. What can separate us from the love of God! With deep sympathy and assurance of my Christian love for you, I am as always,

Your Brother in Christ,

J. W. S.—Ohio.

Dear Brother Russell:—

May the God of all comfort comfort you with these words "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." (Deut. 33:27.) "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."—Isa. 41:10.

There was a time when storms of trouble, threatening destruction to earthly joy, burst in fury upon me. I thought my heart would break. I cried out, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful." Sister T— repeated these precious words to me and I was comforted: "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flames kindle upon thee." (Isa. 43:2.) God was true to his Word. I was uninjured and my faith was greatly increased.

Tressie and Laurice join me in sending Christian love and sympathy to you, and we would assure you of our perfect confidence in you as the servant whom God has chosen to give the "meat in due season to the household."

Sincerely, your sister in Christ,

C. M. E.—Ohio.

Dear Brother Russell:—

We deeply sympathize with you in this hour of persecution, but are comforted with the thought that it has been written and is everywhere shown that the Lord knows how to take care of his own. No doubt many things scandalous and untrue will be published, but

"Truth crushed to earth

Will rise again.

The eternal years of God are here;

But error falling writhes in pain

And dies amidst its worshipers."

Again these words come to us: "All who would live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution," and we are determined that nothing shall separate us from the love of Christ our Lord; not even bitter persecution, famine, peril or the sword. We will not forget to pray for you.

Your brother and sister in the faith,

A. & C. G.—Mississippi.

Dear Brother Russell:—

We spent the morning in mingled thought, prayer and sympathy, and we both wish to remind you that all our people know your character and the fruits that your life has brought forth in abrupt contrast to the fruits of selfishness on the side of your opponent. "By their fruits ye shall know them," said our beloved Master. God had not forsaken him. He has not forsaken you. He never will forsake you—you have his own Word for that! "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil things against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward." Never was there a more applicable expression than is that to your especial case! Also the beautiful text from Brother Paul for April 28 ("Heavenly Manna") and your own beautiful and fitting comment upon it—the text for tomorrow and that for the following day also. What a comfort these must be to you—and how I praise the dear heavenly Father that it is so!

Dear Brother Russell, what a magnificent joint-testimony is yours for the asking, or for the willingness to receive it from us publicly—from all your colporteurs in the field and from your own household, if we may by some means have the great privilege of making it known. Tell me, if you need or desire me, how it may best be given in order to be of the greatest help to you.

I want to try to thank you for the wonderful and beautiful sermon and of last Sunday, "Risen With Christ." It seems to me that every sermon is the most beautiful one I ever read or heard, but oh, this one appealed to me so

deeply! My "heart burned," as did the disciples' hearts on the way to Emmaus, as Jesus talked with them. Truly, as you say in closing, "So many of us as can see this glorious plan have a blessing and a privilege which is hidden from the eyes of many others!" How glad I am that through yourself this great blessing and privilege is mine.

"The Lord bless thee and keep thee, the Lord make his face shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace."

With the very deepest love and sympathy, your least sister in Christ,  
E. G.—West Virginia.

## BROTHER RUSSELL'S WEEKLY SERMONS

Some friends living in Oklahoma and Indian Territories would like to subscribe for a daily newspaper of that vicinity

publishing the Editor's weekly sermons. They can be accommodated if a sufficient number of subscriptions are received.

## A STONE OF STUMBLING

"He shall be for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence . . . to them that stumble at the Word, being disobedient."—1 Pet. 2:8.

"Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which shall try you; as though some strange thing happened unto you."—1 Pet. 4:12.

"Whosoever will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—2 Tim. 3:12. "The disciple is not above his Lord."—Matt. 10:24.

"Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated [enlightened], ye endured a great conflict of sufferings: partly, whilst ye were made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion on me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your valuables, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward."—Heb. 10:32-35.

"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"—Mark 15:34.

"Awake, O sword, against my shepherd and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the pastor and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn my hand upon the little ones. And it shall come to pass that in all the land two parts shall be cut off and die [(1) the little flock of self-sacrificers and (2) the 'great company' of Rev. 7:14]. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined."—Zech. 13:7-9.

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow."—Lam. 1:12.

"He was led as a lamb to slaughter. As a sheep before shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth" [in resistance].—Isa. 53:7.

"It pleased the Lord to wound him, to put him to shame."—Isa. 53:10. "Many were astonished at thee."—Isa. 52:14.

"And Pilate answered, What evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, Crucify him! Crucify him!"—Mark 15:14.

"And Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all over me except it were given thee of my Father in heaven."—John 19:11. "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?"—John 18:11.

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."—Isa. 53:3.

"As he was, so are we in this world."—1 John 4:17.

"Marvel not if the world hate you. Ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but now ye are not of the world because I have chosen you out of the world; therefore the world hateth you."—John 15:18, 19.

"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven."—Matt. 5:11, 12.

"If one member of the body suffers all the members suffer with it. Now are ye the body of Christ and members in particular."—1 Cor. 12:26, 27.

"Count it all joy when ye fall into divers trials." (Jas. 1:2.) "Our light affliction which is but for a moment worketh out for us a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory." (2 Cor. 4:17.) "You who are troubled rest with us."—2 Thess. 7.

"God gave Christ to be the head over the church which is his body." (Eph. 1:22, 23.) "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him." (2 Tim. 2:12.) "If we be dead with him we shall also live with him." (Rom. 6:8.) "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." (2 Pet. 5:6.) "Filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ."—Col. 1:24.

"The reproaches of them that reproach thee are fallen upon me." (Rom. 15:3.) "Let us go to him without the camp bearing the reproach with him."—Heb. 13:13.

## "ASHAMED OF ME AND MY WORD"

LUKE 9:26.

One of the first thoughts to strike us in connection with this text is that our Lord so highly exalts and honors his Word as to put it on a parity with himself. We are not at all surprised at his declaration that those who are ashamed of him he would be ashamed to own as his joint-heirs in the kingdom—ashamed to own or recognize as of his bride class. All that is what we should expect, and yet as we look about us how many we find that seem to be ashamed of the Lord. Some may be inclined to controvert this and say, "No Christian is ashamed of Christ; even the nominal Christians, the tares, are glad to own him Lord of all. The name of Jesus is no longer a name of shame and contempt. God has highly exalted him, and the whole world is coming to adore him more and more every day."

Let us not be too sure that this is the right thought, dear friends. Our own thought is that a certain idealism has been exalted before the minds of civilized people, and that to this idealism they bow and render praise. Our thought is that the real Christ has never had the love or esteem of the world, and that he will not have it until in God's due time the true knowledge shall have filled the earth, and the clouds of ignorance and superstition shall

have rolled away, and when the world in general shall have learned some of the great lessons which the time of trouble introducing the Millennial kingdom will surely teach.

The Christ whom the Jews did not love or esteem or honor, but on the contrary crucified, was holy, harmless, separate from sinners. He was not wealthy, was considered a fanatic because of his loyalty to truth and righteousness, and because he gave his time and energy to loving services for his fellow-creatures and especially in providing spiritual nourishment for them. Therefore his brethren hated him and hid as it were their faces from him—in shame. (Isa. 53:3.) And hence it was decided that they could not be of the Bride class, and as a nation the Jews were cast off until the elect should be found.

The Lord is still present in the world in the flesh—in the flesh of his consecrated members—and the world in general still despises him as at first and as he foretold—"Marvel not if the world hate you; ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world the world would love its own." (John 15:18, 19.) The world is still ashamed of Christ. Nominal Christians, nominal spiritual Israel, are as much ashamed of him today as natural Israel

was ashamed of him eighteen centuries ago. When we consider that our Lord is represented by his members in the flesh we see that love for the brethren means love for the Lord, and hence as the Apostle states this is one of the great tests of our relationship to him and to the Father. "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (1 John 4:20.) "Love one another as I have loved you," is the recognized test of discipleship, and he therefore who is ashamed of the brethren is ashamed of the older brethren. He counts all the younger brethren as himself, saying, "He that despiseth you despiseth me; he that rejecteth you rejecteth me and him that sent me."—Luke 10:16.

It may be a new thought to some that in despising the brethren they are despising the Lord; that in being ashamed of the brethren they are being ashamed of the Lord; and that thus they would be demonstrating that a wrong condition of mind and conduct prevailed: that they were not fit for the kingdom; that they had not reached the mark of perfect love; that they had not only not learned to love their enemies but had not even learned to love the brethren—those who are striving to walk in the footsteps of the Master.

#### ASHAMED OF THE LORD'S WORD

How the Lord's terms and conditions of discipleship do sift and test our very innermost thoughts! He does not address those who burn the Bible nor those who neglect to have a Bible in the house, nor those who neglect to read the Bible, nor those who fail to take their texts from the Bible, nor those who quote the Scriptures incorrectly when they do quote them, but those who in their hearts are ashamed of the Word of God and give evidence of that shame, that lack of appreciation, by their failure to take

their stand in support of the truth. Let us test ourselves, let us prove that we are not ashamed of the Lord, of the brethren or of his Word.

The Word of God is not merely the Bible, but it includes sermons, tracts, books, etc., in proportion as they contain and truly represent the message of God's dear Son. This brings the matter still more closely home, and it implies that we are not to be ashamed of any of the doctrines presented in the Bible, nor to be ashamed of any literature which in the Lord's providence has been prepared and which represents his truth and expounds and illustrates it. The Lord would have a free-minded, open-hearted people, whose hearts would be so loyal to him and to the truth which he represents that they would gladly surrender everything, even life itself, rather than in any measure impede its progress, rather than in any measure bring dishonor or discredit upon it. On the contrary, those who are not ashamed of the Lord and his Word, and who realize that there is nothing in them to be ashamed of, but on the contrary everything to rejoice in, to exult in, will seek to lift high the royal banner, to tell the good tidings of great joy to the extent of their ability, to coöperate with all others who are thus showing forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.—1 Pet. 2:9.

Such are the Lord's jewels, whom in the end of this age he will garner in the kingdom and ultimately associate with himself in the great and glorious work of the Millennial age, the uplifting and refreshing of all the families of the earth. Only those who so love the Lord and his truth as to be willing, yea, glad to suffer reproaches on their account—only such will be counted worthy of the grand and glorious conditions, opportunities and privileges of the Millennial kingdom.

### TRIFLING WITH CONSCIENCE

Mark 6:14-29.—MAY 20.

*Golden Text*—"Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess."—Eph. 5:18.

Trifling with conscience is one of the great dangers of our time, as it has been of all past time. Our lesson offers an illustration along this line, showing how Herod Antipas, King of Galilee and Berea, trifled with his conscience and was thereby ensnared into adultery and murder. Every intelligent person of experience can bear witness to the fact that sins usually creep on gradually. No one plunges instantly from purity into the depths of sin. There is a gradual beginning in which the voice of conscience is heard, and if it be heeded the calamity of gross transgression may be avoided, but unheeded its voice grows more and more faint, its influence in the control of life less and less potent, until, with conscience asleep, the outward course goes from bad to worse, and there is a rude awakening of the individual to find himself ensnared, a captive—perhaps a libertine or a thief or a murderer, or all of these, and apparently with no alternative except to go on in the same direction. How many who have reached such a lamentable state have wished in vain that they again had the opportunity that was theirs at first—of heeding conscience and taking the path of righteousness.

#### "THE SPIRIT OF A SOUND MIND"

The whole world has this experience to some extent, because, however depraved and fallen, as a race we are still not totally depraved;—there still remains in each sane mind an element of conscience, a measure of ability to discern truth from untruth, justice from injustice, right from wrong. Christians perhaps, at the beginning of their new life, have neither more nor less of this quality than the remainder of mankind, but having consecrated their lives to the Lord and his service they have the promised assurance that they are taught of God. Under this teaching their conceptions of right and wrong are clarified—they are less superstitious, less guided by impressions merely, and, instead, have the positive instruction of the divine Word whereby they may more clearly than before discern what is the right and what is the wrong. Still, conscience is the same; it has merely received enlightenment, and must not be any less alert in the Christian than in the worldly person.

On the contrary, backed with the spirit of a sound mind, backed with a consecration of their all to the Lord, and led by the exceeding great and precious promises of the Scripture, they have every reason for following the voice of conscience more carefully than ever. To the enlightened Christian, guided in judgment by God's revelation, the Bible, the voice of conscience becomes really the voice of God, and

obedience to it is imperative. Any transgression of its commands is sure to bring disaster, more serious by far than any which could come to the natural man, because the Christian has taken the advance steps and has received advance knowledge. To the Christian, therefore, the heeding of the voice of conscience may mean either eternal life or eternal death—the second death. And even amongst those who will attain the eternal life the Scriptures show us two classes—the "more than overcomers," the "little flock," who shall be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, and the "great company."

All of this first class, we may be sure, have given earnest heed to the voice of conscience, and have willingly and gladly and promptly followed its guidance as the voice of the truth, as the voice of the Lord speaking to them through his Word and his providences, leading them from grace to grace and from glory to glory until their final change in the first resurrection. To the other class, viz., the "great company" of Revelation 7, conscience will also be the guide by which they will attain the blessing before the throne in the honors and blessings which the Lord will confer upon them as overcomers of the world. Why will conscience lead them to a lower plane, and the first-mentioned class, the little flock, to the higher plane of the divine nature? Not, we answer, because conscience as the Lord's representative will have led them differently, but because they have followed the voice of conscience less carefully, with less zeal, with less perseverance, with less appreciation of how much importance depended upon their following it.

#### HEROD'S CONSCIENCE TORMENTED HIM

The Herod of our lesson (Antipas) was the son of "Herod the Great," who slew the babes of Bethlehem in his endeavor to thwart the divine program. Palestine was directly under the control of the Roman emperors, and instead of perpetuating the kingdom of Herod they partitioned it, and gave one quarter to his son, Herod Antipas, the chief figure in our present lesson. Herodias, a beautiful and ambitious woman, a descendant of Cleopatra, a granddaughter of Herod the Great, was ambitious to be a queen and married her oldest uncle, Philip, supposing that to him would fall the kingdom honors at the hands of the Roman emperor. But he was passed by and Antipas was made tetrarch (i. e., ruler of a fourth part of the kingdom). Herodias was greatly disappointed, and when Herod Antipas came to Rome to be invested with royal honors she arranged it that he should be entertained at his brother's house, her home,



and improved the opportunity to entangle him with her personal charms, so that when he departed for his dominion she eloped with him.

Here we see the parting of the ways for two and how both took the wrong course: the Golden Rule and their instincts for righteousness should have hindered them. We cannot doubt that each had a voice of conscience at that time, to which both closed their hearts. The woman had not only the ties of chastity but the obligation of her marriage covenant to assist her conscience and to strengthen her in the avoiding of the wrong. The man also had a conscience, and knew that in accepting the blandishments of his brother's wife he was violating his marriage covenant with his own wife; he must have known also that in violating the sacred hospitalities of a host, his entertainer, his brother, he was doing an unbrotherly act. Above all he had a sufficient knowledge of the Jewish law to know that his conduct was heinous in the sight of God.

Coming to his home, accompanied by his niece, his brother's wife, as his paramour, a great scandal was raised throughout Palestine, as the people, instructed by the law, recognized that their ruler was living in open violation of it. His proper wife, disheartened, crushed, in the presence of the usurper, obtained permission to remove from Galilee across the lake to another part of the domain, to another palace, Machaerus. She was the daughter of the Arabian king Aretas, and soon managed to return to her father's house. Aretas was very angry and threatened war.

#### HEROD AND NOT OTHER RULERS, REBUKED

When John's ministry was at its height and he was rebuking sin in its every form, the question of Herod's conduct came up, and the great prophet roundly denounced the misconduct, saying that it was contrary to the Law that Herod should thus have his brother's wife, his own niece. The Greek text intimates that this was not said once merely, but rather as though it read, "John was saying"—was teaching continuously that there was wrong at the very head of the nation. As the Jewish nation claimed to be and was accepted as God's special kingdom and people, and professed to live under his special laws in every particular, John was probably within the proprieties of the case in denouncing a ruler of the Jews, while making no criticism of the other rulers of the earth not under divine law and covenant.

Nevertheless, we are to remember that Jesus made no comment along this line. Nothing in John's course should be construed as a special example of what we should do today in respect to public functionaries—in criticism of their lives and affairs. There is no nation today in the world which God has accepted in the same sense that he accepted the nation of Israel, no nation today that professes to be under discipline and guidance as was Israel then. Our Lord indicates our relationship to the world, saying, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." (Matt. 22:21.) The Apostle explains that in all matters that do not conflict with our own personal liberties and conscience we are to recognize the official position of those who are governing the world. Hence Christians of today are to judge themselves and to scrutinize the affairs of the church and to purge out from their midst all leaven, but they are not to attempt to purge the world or to think of the world as being under their judgment now.

True, the Apostle says, "Know ye not that the saints are to judge the world?" (1 Cor. 6:2.) But he evidently refers to the time when the saints shall be qualified as judges, when in the end of this age they shall be changed from mortal to immortal, from imperfect to perfect, and be like their Lord and associated with him in the judging and ruling of the world, which then will begin and extend to every nation and every member of Adam's race. They were to live peaceably, so far as possible, with all men, rendering homage to whom homage is due, reverence to whom reverence is due, but always, both publicly and privately, acknowledging our primary obligations every way to the Heavenly Father and to his Son, our Redeemer.

#### HEROD CAST JOHN INTO PRISON

Herod's pride was stung by John's comments, and no doubt he feared that, unreprieved, unchecked, this might lead to disorders in the realm. He settled the matter by putting John in prison. Nevertheless we read that he feared John, realizing that he was a righteous man—a man who was following his conscience in a right course to the best of his ability. There is even an intimation (vs. 19, 20) that John's imprisonment was in part at least to protect him from the anger of Herodias, who desired to kill him, and who doubtless would not have hesitated to hire assassins who would be more bold to thus procure a large reward, in the ex-

pectancy that Herodias would intercede with the king and secure their release.

The intimation of the Greek is that Herod gave John the Baptist frequent hearings, listened to his arguments—that he heard him willingly, but was much perplexed. (R. V.) Herodias evidently realized that her hold upon the king was endangered. She seems to have been a woman of practically no conscience. She had risked all for her present station, and now what would she not risk to maintain it? If John the Baptist's teaching should influence Herod to put her away she would be in worse condition than ever before—a reprobate, an outcast, without a name or home or anything. To such a mind such an outcome was not to be considered, and anything was to be undertaken that would stand in the way of such a danger.

Thus it has been with many others occupying less prominent places in the world's history: ambition has misled them, and pride has been the force which not only overruled the voice of conscience but ultimately made murderers of those who at first, when conscience began to reprove, would have been shocked at the very thought of such an outcome. So it is on a lesser scale with some: pride and ambition, perhaps operating in another direction, have led conscience a chase, until figuratively in a corner the deluded one has resorted to lies and slanders and assassinations of reputation, the very thought of which at first would have been repelled with horror. How necessary to heed the voice of conscience!

Look at Herod, too, how his failure to heed conscience led him step by step deeper into the mire. Notice how, when he heard John and was perplexed, if he had followed conscience he still might have gone free; but failing to heed it he became more and more entangled, until the culmination recorded in this lesson was reached, until he murdered the Lord's prophet.

Herodias was on the lookout for a convenient occasion on which to entrap still further the man who was already under her power through neglecting the voice of his conscience. Days were precious to her; she knew not when the Prophet's words might take effect upon Herod's conscience; she believed that he had a little conscience, and that it was troubled to some extent. Her auspicious time came with Herod's birthday; she would encourage his vanity; she would help to arrange the preliminaries for making it a great day of festival; she would thus endear herself to Herod as the one who sought most his elevation before the world.

Herod had sent John away from Galilee to the palace at Machaerus, which was also a fortress. In so doing he was removing him from Herodias and her particular influence, and satisfying her also in that he was at a greater distance and would be less frequently seen by Herod. It is supposed that the feast was held at that palace fortress, that indeed Herod was there at that time preparing for the war with the king of Arabia, and that the gathering of the nobles of the land was in a measure a patriotic rally throughout the kingdom to assure himself of the favor and good will of all of his under lords and influential subordinates. Such festivals were attended by men alone, and bountifully supplied not only with food but also with beverages, as a result of which the whole company would become quite convivial.

Herodias knew the king quite well and was laying a trap for him. She knew that when he was surrounded by his nobles and princes whatever he promised he would feel bound to fulfil: she knew, too, that it was the custom of the time and country that, toward the conclusion of such a feast, dancing girls would appear in the midst clothed in transparent garments, and that under such circumstances it was customary for the king to give some present to the danseuse proportionate to his appreciation of her self-abandonment in the voluptuous dancing. Herodias prepared a surprise for them all: the dancing girls were usually from the lower classes—she would make a special impression upon all by sending her daughter, a princess, a granddaughter of Herod the Great, to perform this part. The woman's cunning shows at every step, and, her plans carried out exactly as she had arranged and hoped, the king and his nobles were taken by surprise, and the former said to the maiden, "Ask your gift and it shall be yours to the extent of one-half of my dominion." If we are inclined to think of this as an extravagant matter, let us remember that many a wealthy voluptuary has been similarly foolish, spending thousands and hundreds of thousands upon actresses and other conscienceless women in our day.

#### THE CUNNING OF A SERPENT

Herodias kept the matter to herself—not even her daughter Salome knew of the price she expected to exact; the girl had

merely been advised that when the king would ask her choice of a gift and had declared his willingness to give her one, she should withdraw to inquire of her mother what she should ask. Herod was astonished at the request for the head of John the Baptist. Unprincipled as he was, hard-hearted, without a conscience, sadly demoralized, he had never thought of murdering God's prophet. We read that the king "was exceeding sorry." To some extent evidently he began to realize that he had been entrapped. To a man of well-balanced mind, of properly guided judgment, the question would have been easily settled, but not so to one of Herod's character.

Whatever conscience Herod had, now got upon the other side of the question, and insisted that he had made oath and that an oath should not be broken; and that for a king to break his oath, made in the presence of his nobles, would imply that he was a man devoid of all principle and character, and that these courtiers could not rely upon him or any promises he would make to them in connection with the war about to be prosecuted. Hence we read that for his oath's sake and for the sake of those who were of the company, and we might add for pride's sake, Herod yielded, and as the request was one that should be met forthwith he sent the executioner at once to John. He thus showed his greatness as a king, his respect for his illustrious company, and his high standard of value for his oath and his authority and power as a king. Truly the Scriptures declare that many things that are highly esteemed amongst men are an abomination in the sight of God, and in proportion as God's people become possessed of his spirit, his mind, his disposition, the spirit of a sound mind, in the same proportion these things become an abomination to us.

#### JOHN THE BAPTIST VERSUS HEROD ANTIPAS

Two great characters on the page of history are before our minds: The Lord's prophet, of whom Jesus declared, "There hath not arisen a greater prophet than John the Baptist," and Herod Antipas, prominent in his day and black marked on the page of history for the past eighteen centuries. The one was a man of God, whose life and time and all were consecrated to the service of his Maker, to the promulgation of righteous principles, to exhorting his fellow creatures to abandon sin and to follow righteousness: the other enthroned in power, with great possibilities of influence for good or evil, used those opportunities injuriously to himself and contrary to every principle of righteousness and every good influence upon the people over whom he held a brief authority. The one used up his life in the preaching of the truth, suffered imprisonment and then beheading; the other lived a luxurious life of self-gratification amongst the plaudits of men, and had the power to take the life of the other. What will the harvest be?

Can any one who believes in a God, and trusts to the fulfillment of his promises respecting a future life, doubt that there will be a wide distinction between these two men in the future? Can any one who understands the divine plan doubt that John the Baptist, faithful until death, will be one of the princes whom the Lord of glory will appoint in the future for the guidance and direction of the world's affairs and for the uplift of the groaning creation? To such sterling characters the Lord can entrust much of his work, and we, perceiving the Lord's selection for the same, can have all the greater confidence in the grand outcome of that work in God's due time. But what shall we expect for Herod and others of his class, who have violated their consciences and degraded themselves

and misused their opportunities for evil instead of for good? We must surely expect that they will be beaten with many stripes, that they will have punishments—not eternal torment, thank God, but, as the Scriptures declare, a just recompense of reward to every soul of man that doeth evil.—Rom. 2:9.

In proportion as Herod had great opportunities and defiled and degraded his conscience, in the same proportion, undoubtedly, he will awaken in the resurrection morning in a low condition morally, and proportionately will he have the more steps to retrace to God back to what he was at the beginning of his career, poor as that might have been. And still it will require further advancement, development, upward steps during the thousand years of the Millennial age to attain if he will in the end gain the perfection that was lost in Eden and redeemed at Calvary.

#### "SHAME AND LASTING CONTEMPT"

The violation of conscience and the abuse of power practiced by Herod and Herodias have made them infamous throughout the world. The Scriptures assure us that in God's due time, during the Millennium, they with the remainder of Adam's family will as a result of Christ's redemptive work come forth from the tomb. Through the prophet Daniel the Lord has pictured the mass of mankind as awakening to shame and lasting contempt, and these two, we may be sure, will have special shame and contempt along with Nero and other horrible characters of history. By the time they are awakened, we may presume that the whole world will have reached a fair degree of development and progress toward perfection.

The knowledge of the Lord will be world-wide and ocean deep, and the human mind will have expanded proportionately, so that the misdeeds of this pair will be more intensely abhorred than at present, except by the saints. It will be a heavy burden upon the guilty ones as they face the knowledge of the world respecting their reprobate course. They will feel like sinking through the earth from very shame. Moreover, the violations of conscience and degradation therefrom will serve to keep them longer in this detestable condition than they might otherwise remain—their progress toward perfection will be the slower on this account, and hence their measure of shame and contempt the greater and the more prolonged.

We thank God, however, that through Christ there is forgiveness of sins even for the vilest, and that these, who never heard of Christ in the true sense of the word, but whose minds were thoroughly blinded and degraded by sin under the influence of the god of this world, will ultimately reach enlightenment, and that learning of the grace of God through Christ they will have an opportunity of laying hold upon his mercy and receiving an uplifting blessing that gradually will deliver them from their shameful condition and from the contempt of fellow creatures—or, failing to use this mercy and these privileges and thus proving themselves unworthy of any of God's favors, they will die the death—the second death. We must remember in this connection our Lord's promise that it will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom and Gomorrah than for Capernaum and other cities of Galilee, and so we presume it will be more tolerable for the King of Sodom than for King Herod. And yet, withal, the Lord's blessed provision is such that his arrangements for even the worst of mankind in general will not be intolerable. Everything that can be done for their recovery from sin and death we may be sure will be done.

## HE GIVETH FOOD TO THE HUNGRY

Mark 6:30-44.—MAY 27.

"My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven."—John 6:32.

The twelve apostles had returned from the mission work to which the Lord sent them two by two. No doubt there was a fixed time for their return and Capernaum was probably the rendezvous. The presence of Jesus and his apostles caused commotion amongst the people, because by this time our Lord's fame was generally spread abroad. At Jesus' suggestion the twelve went with him to a country place that they might have quiet for the discussion of their affairs—their experiences on their mission, and the lessons Jesus wished to emphasize in connection with their experiences. Our Lord intimated, too, that the rest would be beneficial to them. Is not the same lesson applicable to us today?

Ours are strenuous times of great activity, mental and physical. The Lord's people, busied with the common activities of life, endeavoring to provide things needful, honest, and endeavoring also to tell the good tidings and show forth the praises of the Master and to proclaim his presence, have spe-

cial need to heed the words, "Come ye yourselves apart in a desert place and rest awhile." Many of us enjoyed a brief season of resting and refreshment at last year's conventions, especially at the one held at Niagara Falls. But still the rest feature hardly seemed to be sufficiently emphasized even there. Hence we are planning for the present year two general conventions, with about the same number of meetings spread over about twice the number of days, giving better opportunity for fellowship, communion and rest. It is our experience that while these conventions cost those attending them considerable money, especially for railway fares, they nevertheless are sources of great spiritual profit and refreshment. Likewise the one-day conventions, though in a lesser degree and to smaller numbers. The Lord, we believe, is pleased that we should estimate spiritual strength, refreshment, grace, above financial cost. This, however, would not signify extravagance, wastefulness, neglect of duty nor the contracting of debt.

**"ALL MEN WERE IN EXPECTATION"**

But the people were hungry for the Lord's teachings, and noting the direction of the boat many went afoot and some ran so that they awaited the Lord upon the landing of the boat. Was the Lord angry that his endeavor for privacy and rest should be thus intruded upon by people for whom he had already done much? No! his heart was too full of sympathy for that. He looked about upon the people and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep having no shepherd. John the Baptist had been proclaiming the coming of God's kingdom. Jesus had been giving parables illustrative of the kingdom, which the people but imperfectly comprehended. The disciples, whom he had sent out two by two, had proclaimed repentance and preparation for the kingdom. King Herod, living wickedly, had gone the length of beheading John, one of the greatest of the prophets, and subsequently he had been at war with King Aretas of Arabia, the father of his deserted wife. His army had been defeated and there was considerable turmoil and excitement amongst the people. They wondered as to what might be the outcome of these disturbances, when and how the kingdom of God would be established. They questioned as to whether or not Jesus were truly the Messiah and would shortly announce himself as the king, and call for volunteer soldiers, etc., etc. Evidently the people were becoming greatly worked up on the subject, and we know that it was only a few days after this that Jesus withdrew from the public ministry in that vicinity for awhile, lest the people should take him by force and make him a king—contrary to the divine plan and our Lord's program.

Although desiring rest our Lord could not forbear to teach the people. He was the true Shepherd and ready at all times to fulfil his mission, to lay down his very life for the sheep—not merely at Calvary but hourly, daily, during the years of his ministry while he was approaching the grand climax of his sacrifice. This must be the spirit of all who are the Lord's true disciples—increasingly so as they become partakers of the Master's holy Spirit, by feeding upon his Word and following his directions, growing in grace and knowledge and love.

**"THY KINGDOM COME"**

Today many of the Lord's people in Babylon are in a similar condition—easily persuaded that we are living in remarkable times, that some great dispensational change is about at hand. Many have heard something respecting the Millennial kingdom being nigh, even at the door, and are wondering how, when, why, where it will be established. Looking to the political leaders they see more or less of confusion, hear of wars and rumors of wars, and the voice of Socialism proclaiming a general overturning of matters in the very near future. They note an impending time of trouble between capital and labor, and they long for information, for leading, for guidance, as to what should be their proper course. They are as sheep having no shepherd.

True, there are many shepherds in Babylon, but in proportion as they notice that these are leading toward infidelity, toward higher criticism of the Bible and evolutionary theories, they fear such leading, they lack confidence in it. They know not to whom they should look. The most satisfying portion that reaches their ears is the message of the kingdom as we proclaim it, and yet they fear to accept this in the face of the denunciations and anathemas of their shepherds, who in a measure control them through fear, superstition and priestcraft. Every member of the body of Christ should remember that he is an ambassador for the Lord and should be glad to be used as his mouthpiece in proclaiming the good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people, and in helping lead the sheep in the right way toward the true Shepherd.

Not that we can hope to influence all who are in a measure hungry: evidently only a little flock will be in that condition of heart where they will heed not the voice of strangers, but will follow the voice of the Son of God—the voice of the truth. Nevertheless, like the Master, we should be compassionate toward all, rejoicing that those who cannot hear distinctly in the present time will hear unequivocally very shortly, when the kingdom shall be established and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth.

**"TAUGHT THEM MANY THINGS"**

We should take a lesson from the Master's example. There were many things that he could teach even to the multitude that would be to their advantage, to their comfort, and serve as a preparation for their development, so that they would by and by be prepared for the deeper things. To his twelve apostles, and those who were his specially consecrated disciples, he had still other things to tell, saying, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but

unto them that are without these things are done in parables." (Mark 4:11.) And yet even to the disciples there were certain things better left unsaid, as our Master intimated: "I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now"—"the spirit of truth shall guide you into all truth."—John 16:12, 13.

So the Apostle says, we may talk of the deep things of God, the wisdom of God hidden in mysteries, to those who are advanced in the knowledge of him and those prepared in heart for the deeper truths. We are to be especially on guard against choking the babes in Christ with the strong meat; but nevertheless we are not to allow them to starve, but to give them the milk of the Word that they may grow thereby. Let us remember our Lord's words as well as his example: he said, "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves." Doubtless every one who reads these words can realize that in the beginning of his efforts to serve the Lord and his cause he did more injury than good because of unwisdom, indiscretion, a failure to take heed to the instructions of the Lord, a failure to follow his example of giving milk to babes and strong meat to men.

From an account given in another of the Gospels it seems evident that after teaching the people our Lord left them for a time and went with his disciples apart on the hillside, where they reviewed their ministries. Doubtless, also, they had opportunities for such fellowship and recounting on the boat on the journey. It would appear to have been later in the day, in the afternoon, that he came down from the mountain and that the crowds already there were augmented by large caravans, which at this time were en route for Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover, the whole multitude numbering several thousand. Apparently the newcomers were full of questions and interest and our Lord gave forth teachings and expositions.

**"GIVE YE THEM TO EAT"**

The night was coming on and the disciples urged that the Lord should disperse the people, but he had a purpose which they knew not of—he had in mind one of the greatest miracles of his entire ministry. However, instead of telling them of it, he allowed the matter to come about in the most natural way, suggesting to them that they should seat the multitude and he would assist them in their helplessness. He inquired what food they possessed, and a lad with four barley loaves and two small fishes was found—next to nothing. This served our Lord's purpose, however; he wished to show his willingness to cooperate in the work of blessing the multitude, and thus he illustrated a general feature of his dealings with his people and with the world. He takes our time and talents, little and unworthy as these are, and blesses them and uses them in his service and accomplishes great things. He thus associates his people with himself, and blesses them by these experiences and lessons even more than he blesses those to whom he sends them with his mercies, temporal and spiritual.

The disciples had learned to be obedient in respect to whatever the Master would propose; hence we find no objection offered to the Lord's command that they apparently make themselves foolish in the sight of the people by bidding them sit down in a hundred companies of fifty to prepare for a feast when apparently no feast could be spread for them. They were beginning to learn that he who could fill their nets with fish, who could awaken from the sleep of death, who could restore withered hands and heal without a touch by a word, was so different from themselves as to be beyond the power of their judgment or criticism. They obeyed; the Lord did the rest.

**BLESSING THE BREAD**

Our lesson says that the Lord blessed the bread; John's Gospel recounting the same matter says, "He gave thanks." The two thoughts are in close agreement—the giving of thanks to God brought indeed a blessing upon the food. We pause here to suggest that if it was appropriate that the Only Begotten of the Father should render thanks for that frugal meal and should ask the divine blessing upon it, it is certainly becoming that any who in any sense of the word profess to be his followers should copy his example in this as well as in other things. How can we partake of food, recognizing that it is of God's bounty and provision, without returning our thanks or acknowledgments? We feel sure that all who do render thanks receive special blessing with their food and upon it, and a special wisdom in respect to the use of it that others fail to get. The very peace and rest of heart which comes as a result of looking to the Lord in gratitude, and accepting his provision with thankfulness, by natural law insures a tranquillity which is favorable to the digestion of the food. Undoubtedly food which is eaten in a pleasant and thankful attitude of mind is more nourishing, more refreshing, than the same food if eaten in unthankfulness or anger or with feelings of dissatisfaction.



Notice also that the feast for which our Lord returned thanks was not a sumptuous one; it was not served in elegant, decorated ware; it was not fine food; it was plain barley bread and dried fish. As we think of the simplicity of the diet of our Lord's day and of that of the people of oriental countries still, and as we consider the food furnished to the Japanese army and the usual food of the Japanese family, we get the lesson that both in quantity and in quality many people of our day are overfed and perhaps not benefited thereby—that plainness and simplicity of food would not only be more healthful, but would leave much more time for the spiritual refreshment, the bread from heaven, and the service of the truth to others. Each should consider this matter and act upon it according to his circumstances and the interests and preferences of others, which he is surely bound to consider.

One lesson, however, all can appropriate, namely, that gratitude to God is appropriate however simple our bill of fare. It would be our hope that so far as possible the readers of this journal in their family associations are not neglectful of this privilege of giving thanks—to the extent that they are the persons having properly the authority or conduct of the family's affairs. It would be, of course, inappropriate for a stranger or a visitor to intrude upon the customs of the family, nor can we think that it is always appropriate to openly manifest our thankfulness to the Lord when at public tables, at hotels, restaurants, etc. We might be pleased to thus acknowledge the Lord, but might well refrain if our conduct would be misapprehended as Pharisaism. In such cases, however, the heart should always render thanks—even if no outward sign or word should indicate it to those about us—before a mouthful of food be taken.

#### THE DISCIPLES GAVE TO THE PEOPLE

Other accounts show us that as the Lord broke the food he distributed it to his disciples, they in turn carrying it to the multitude. How gracious of the Lord to so arrange matters! The disciples were thus the better witnesses of the power of the miracle, and the people were more or less made acquainted with the apostles, who perhaps later on, after Pentecost, met many of them, and, as the Master's representatives, bore to them the heavenly bread. It is still the same, for the Lord will find and will feed and will strengthen those who are his, for "the Lord knoweth them that are his." (2 Tim. 2:19.) He is not at all dependent upon us for the carrying of the present truth to the hungry multitude, but for our advantage he has given us the privilege of becoming co-laborers with him. How we should appreciate it! How eager we should be that any little barley loaves we may possess, any little fishes, any dollars and dimes, any shillings and pence, any time and influence, might be used of the Lord in his blessed work!

While such a course on our part is in the Scriptures dignified by the name of sacrifice, yet really, to those who understand the situation properly, it is the very reverse, a blessing, a privilege, a favor. We are glad to note that this privilege is so highly esteemed by those who are now rejoicing in the present truth. It is a matter of continual wonder to the enemies of the truth, as well as to the slightly interested, that means seem never lacking for the promulgation of the harvest message, and that without resorting to appeals to the world through festivals, fairs, etc., without importuning the Lord's people by requests for money or any collection baskets—the Spirit of the Lord seems to accompany the truth, so that those who have the truth and have talents of any kind for the Lord's service rejoice with joy unspeakable to have these used, giving thanks to the Master for the privileges they enjoy.

#### "ALL ATE AND WERE FILLED"

It was not merely a taste of food that the Lord provided, but a satisfying portion—all had plenty. We may reasonably suppose, however, that a meal consisting of barley bread and dried fish would not be partaken of as liberally as if condiments, spices, sauces and preserves, sweets, etc., had been supplied. Perhaps nature with us all would act more reasonably,

so we would know when we had enough, if we lived more upon the plain substantial of life, and did not too much pamper our appetites and encourage ourselves to eat beyond the point of proper satisfaction of hunger.

That great multitude in some respects pictures the world during the Millennial age. Those who now follow the Lord as his special disciples will then be supplied abundantly by the Master with the bread of eternal life and will be privileged to distribute it to all the families of the earth. They will all have the opportunity of being filled, refreshed, strengthened. As we see how much the world lacks in this matter now, our hearts rejoice to know of the abundance of God's provision for the future and of the share we shall have in co-laboring with our Redeemer in the distribution of it to every creature, that all who will may take of the water of life freely and eat of the bread of life to their satisfaction. It was on the day after this miracle that our Lord gave his discourse on the bread of life.—John 6:26-58.

#### GATHERING UP THE FRAGMENTS

It would strike us as rather severe economy that the Lord should send his apostles to gather of the leavings of the feast from the multitude. It would be rather severe economy to oblige the faithful twelve to subsist upon the scraps that had been fingered by five thousand people. It seems much more reasonable to suppose that the small fragments left by the multitude were allowed to go to the birds and squirrels, and that the fragments gathered by the apostles were those broken by our Lord. As he broke the loaves and fishes they multiplied exceedingly, so that he supplied and resupplied the disciples with the food, while they carried it to the multitude, and that a sufficiency remained beside for our Lord to fill the twelve baskets with food that was good and clean and in every way suitable for further use.

The lesson of economy is appropriate to us all, but in our experience the poorest of the world and of the Lord's people often have greatest need for this lesson. While the Lord had abundance of power to create, he would have his disciples note the principle of economy and practise it. His wealth of power should not be a cause of extravagance on the part of any who are his. Extravagance in any matter seems much out of place in any that are our Lord's followers. If we have more than we need are there not others who have less than they need? If we have the Spirit of the Master we will have the spirit of helpfulness and generosity, and that increasingly as we come more and more into his character-likeness.

The same lesson seems to come to us in connection with the harvest work. We sometimes say to ourselves, "While our Lord is rich why should any of his followers be poor?" Undoubtedly it must be to our advantage that the Lord provides apparently just what is needed for his work and no more. The lesson in this parable is that he desires to give us, his followers, opportunities for sacrificing in connection with his service, and thus to bless us and to enable us more and more to appreciate our privileges. Perhaps, too, if the harvest work were blessed with wealthy friends and abundance of money this would foster more of a worldly spirit, more of pride and outward display, which would be disadvantageous to the cause and unfavorable for our own development. Let us be content with such things as we have, with the plain bread and fish, with our Lord's blessing. Let us take heed to the fragments, too, that we may render up a faithful record of our stewardship, that we may see to it that the talents entrusted to us have not been buried in the earth, but have been used to the best of our ability to the glory of our King.

As our Golden Text declares, we are to give our Father in heaven thanks for every good thing, including the bread of life—including Jesus, the salvation which he provides, and the kingdom blessings which are coming through him and the privileges of association with him. All things are of the Father, and all our favors are by or through the Son. Gratitude is one of the smallest returns imaginable: it leads on to perfect love, which includes a self-sacrificing spirit.

### A MESSAGE FROM THE SAN FRANCISCO FRIENDS

Dear Brother Russell:—

Your kind favor of 25th ult. is before me, just received, and I hasten to reassure you as to the safety and reasonably good health of all the dear ones to our assembly in and around San Francisco—a majority of whom were privileged to attend our usual service on the 29th at the usual hour. We surely can rejoice in having been all so miraculously spared and having lost nothing but a few hours of inconvenience and in one case their earthly belongings.

In the name of our church I desire to thank you all for your kind and brotherly interest in our welfare, and will state

that there is no need at present of any material or financial assistance, but if it should become necessary in the near future I will gladly avail myself, on behalf of our dear ones, of such from your dear generous hearts and hands, but at present we are all well provided for. It was my intention to advise you concerning the welfare of our church before this, and the omission was caused by the necessity of writing so many letters in answer to inquiries from so many different places and in seeking after those of our number who resided in San Francisco, so pardon my negligence.

This calamity has caused many thousands, like myself, to