

trying experience in your life. The Pittsburgh friends are rejoicing in the opportunity to suffer with you, and the Lord is granting the daily strength.

On Saturday and Sunday we had the pleasure of hearing our dear Brother Thorn expound the further unfolding of God's plan. He spoke of the restoration of the Jews to their land, called the attention to the significance of their Passover Supper coming the day following ours, and also to the significance of the opening date of the recent Zionist Congress in Pittsburgh, June 22nd, the day following a most memorable day in the history of our Society. Note how in this wonderful sequence of events the ceremonial and governmental features of the movements effected have been kept separate and distinct. This Congress accomplished more than did the former twenty Zionist conventions put together; and we are agreeably surprised to learn that it occurred forty years to the month after the Congress of Berlin, 1878, the first ray of hope to the Jew

since the dispersion in 73 A. D. We are also glad to note that this important Congress honored the home city of our beloved Pastor, who for the past forty years has through his writings been calling the attention of the world to the significance of that event.

"A little while, now he has come,
The hour draws on apace,
The blessed hour, the glorious morn
When we shall see his face.
How light our trials then will seem,
How short our pilgrim way,
This life of earth a fitful dream,
Dispelled by dawning day!"

With further assurance of our daily prayers, and requesting your prayers for our guidance, we are
Your brother and sister in the Lord,

O. M. & B. I. M.—Pa.

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THE NEW COVENANT

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah."—Jeremiah 31:31.

The new covenant is the Scriptural name for the new arrangement between God and man which will be instituted at the beginning of the age to follow this, and by which God purposes to receive the world of mankind again into favor with himself. The covenant relationship which Adam originally enjoyed with his Maker, and its resultant harmony with him, was based upon contingent obedience to the expressed will of God, and was forfeited by disobedience.

This covenant relationship with God was renewed typically at Mount Sinai, with Israel. (Exodus 19:1-9; 24:3-8) Through Moses as mediator, God promised that if Israel would keep his law they should have everlasting life. The inauguration of that Law Covenant was effected by their mediator, six months after Israel left Egypt, through the sacrifices of bulls and of goats; the children of Israel solemnly agreeing to their part of the covenant. These Atonement Day sacrifices were repeated year by year continually; for the blood of bulls and of goats could never take away sin. (Hebrews 10:1-9) Israel failed to gain the blessing promised in their Law Covenant. God foreknew that Israel would fail; but through their endeavors he was giving an object lesson which would in the future be a lasting blessing to Israel and to the world.

The mediation of the old Law Covenant brought Israel into a typical covenant relationship to God. The mediation of the new Law Covenant will bring not only Israel, but all mankind who will have come into line with the kingdom arrangements, into actual covenant relationship. Then each individual will be finally tested by Jehovah, as Adam was in the beginning, to demonstrate whether he is worthy of everlasting life. None who fail to stand the test will be permitted to enter upon the eternal ages of blessing to follow.

THE EFFECT OF THE "BETTER SACRIFICES"

God will introduce this new Law Covenant through the Mediator of the New Covenant, Christ Jesus, in whom the entire arrangement centers, and through whom it will be carried out. For a period of a thousand years this Mediator will do a work of mediation for mankind. And he will not only be Mediator, but will be Priest, Prophet, King, Judge. As priest, he will uplift and bless humanity and receive their offerings. (See Tabernacle Shadows, pp. 93-100) As king he will rule mankind in righteousness; as prophet he will teach them; as judge he will decide and pass sentence, favorable or unfavorable. It will require the full thousand years to bring the people out of their condition of death and degradation, to restore whosoever will of all mankind to the image and likeness of God, lost by Adam in Eden.

The basis of mediation on the part of the better Mediator will be the "better sacrifices" of this Gospel age. Let us notice the Apostle's declaration regarding this matter. In referring to the type, he says, "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these." (Hebrews 9:23) The words "heavens" and "heavenly things" as used in this text do not refer to spiritual things; for nothing spiritual is secured by these better sacrifices. Only human blessings, human rights, are thus secured. The word "heavens" means "heaved up, or higher"; and in order to understand its specific meaning in any text, the word must be defined in harmony with its context. St. Paul is here contrasting the types of the Jewish age with the antitypes of the Gospel dispensation.

In the antitypical arrangement the sacrifices will never be repeated. They are offered once for all. Through the "better sacrifices" the antitypical Mediator will have the power to start the world with a clean slate, as it were. Then the work of uplift, of restitution, will begin. As the Lord declares through the prophet, "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh."—Ezekiel 36:26; 11:19.

DEATH UNDER THE NEW ORDER

Thus Adam's sin and condemnation, which came to mankind by heredity, will no more be remembered by anybody; that is to say, it will be no more a torturing remembrance. While the lessons learned by the world through their experiences with sin and death will never be forgotten, nor their benefits lost, nevertheless these experiences will cease to distress mankind. The joys which will then be theirs will swallow up the sorrows and tears of the past; and the minds of mankind will be filled with the wonderful truths, the wonderful blessings, the glorious new projects and prospects continually opening before their widening vision. To all eternity the perfected earth will be filled with a race of happy, perfect beings in the human likeness of their Lord.

The work of taking away the stony heart, and the giving of a heart of flesh will be gradual, however. Many will awake to shame, in proportion to their wilfulness in sin in the past. But the disciplinary processes of the kingdom will gradually relieve all who are amenable to the influences of righteousness and to the work of reformation then instituted. By degrees their hard-heartedness will disappear, and they will become more and more tender-hearted and affectionate. No member of the human race will longer be held accountable for Adam's sin. In Ezekiel 18:2-4, we read of present conditions: "The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge." But during the next age the effects of the sour grape of sin will be gradually eliminated. Under the new order, whoever dies will die for his own sin, not for the sin of his fathers.

Since all mankind are in a condition of imperfection, all will in that day still be liable to commit sin. The only arrangement by which they can attain to everlasting life will be by their adoption into the family of the Mediator—the Christ—who will quicken their weak mortal bodies. Although no divine condemnation will hold over against them from their past, yet only such as come into proper relationship with the Mediator will receive the divine blessing. Under the New Covenant the special favors of the Lord will be only for the obedient. Whoever rejects the opportunities then offered will, at the close of the first hundred years, be destroyed from amongst the people.—Isaiah 65:20. *Leaser.*

THE SEALING OF THE NEW COVENANT

God cannot consistently enter into a covenant with people who are under his own sentence of death. Under the typical arrangement of the Law Covenant, the death of bulls and of goats was accepted as a sacrifice to God; and the people of Israel, thus typically cleansed, were enabled to enter into a typical relationship with him. This did not mean that the blood of bulls and of goats was sufficient to take away sin; but that it was a typical representation of the real sacrifices, under the Grace Covenant, the Covenant of Sacrifice.

If the New Covenant were now sealed, then all the blood of the covenant must have been previously prepared, must have

been already fully shed. If this were true, then we could have no chance of sharing in the death of Christ. It is evident, then, that the New Covenant is not yet sealed. The antitypical bullock has been slain, and his blood taken into the Most Holy. The antitypical goat is in process of being slain. When its sacrifice shall have been fully completed, its blood will be sprinkled upon the heavenly Mercy Seat by the great High Priest, as was the blood of the bullock. In other words, the merit of Jesus, now in the hands of Justice, will then be free from embargo, and will be applied by our High Priest as an offset to Adam's sin. At the end of this Gospel age, now about closed, all the sacrificing will be over, and the great Mediator will be ready to do the work assigned to him for the world.

The first work of the new dispensation will be the application of the blood upon the antitypical Mercy Seat, in heaven, to make reconciliation for the sins of "all the people"—the entire race of Adam. Until that shall have been done, the New Covenant cannot be inaugurated. This second presentation of the blood of Jesus, of the merit of his sacrifice, will effect the sealing, or making valid, of the covenant.

NEW COVENANT BENEFITS WORLD-WIDE

For many centuries the New Covenant has been promised (Jeremiah 31:31-34), but it has not yet gone into effect. As soon as the blood of the Atonement shall have been applied for the sins of all the people, the New Covenant will become operative. At the beginning of the new dispensation the world will begin life anew, so to speak. The condemnation resting upon them for six thousand years will have been canceled. Satisfaction to Justice will have been made for Adam and for his posterity, who fell in him. All the resultant blessings are to come through the Redeemer's hands, as Mediator. Throughout the Millennium, all who ever would have life must obtain it through this great Life-giver. (John 5:21) None can receive a share of the blessing provided save by the terms of the New Covenant and by endeavoring to live up to them. All who do so will be helped and granted grace sufficient through the Mediator.

The sprinkling of the blood upon the heavenly Mercy Seat on behalf of all mankind will take place before restitution begins, before the legal right to live can be given even to the ancient worthies. Nevertheless, although the sins of the past will be fully canceled, whoever would have God's blessing, God's approval must become "an Israelite indeed"—must become a believer in God, by believing in the Mediator, who will be God's Representative, and by placing himself in the hands of the Christ for training and uplifting. This law of the New Covenant will be applicable to every son and daughter of Adam. Whoever would attain life everlasting must accept Christ and join this earthly kingdom class; for Christ's kingdom will rule the world until all sin and all wilful sinners are destroyed.

The entire race of mankind will receive some benefit from the New Covenant, irrespective of their acceptance of Christ, in that they will be awakened from the tomb and be brought to a knowledge of the truth. (1 Timothy 2:3-6) The Scriptures tell us that as by the offense of one man condemnation passed upon all, so by the obedience of one man the free gift comes to all, unto justification of life. (Romans 5:12, 18) Because of the application of Christ's sacrificial merit for all men, it will be just for God to awaken the world from death and give all an opportunity to attain justification to perfect life. This free gift of God through Christ does not guarantee eternal life to any except upon specific conditions. We would say, therefore, that the benefits of the New Covenant will be applicable to everybody in a limited sense. If God had foreseen that nobody would adopt this arrangement, that fact would no doubt have altered his plan.

THE SIN UNTO DEATH

At the introduction of the new age, all the accounts against humanity will have been canceled by divine Justice, and mankind will be turned over to the Mediator; for if they were kept under divine Justice, they would immediately be condemned again, because of their inability to do perfectly. Therefore the Father will not take cognizance of sinners. For a thousand years they will be left under the merciful provisions of the New Covenant. Those who will obediently do their best will receive all the blessings of the kingdom; and those who will not become obedient under those conditions will go into the second death.

During the Gospel dispensation, the only ones who can commit the sin unto death (1 John 5:16), blasphemy against the holy Spirit (Matthew 12:31, 32), are those who have been enlightened of the holy Spirit. St. Paul says, "As touching those who were once enlightened, and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the holy Spirit, and tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the age to

come, and then fell away, it is impossible to renew them unto repentance." (Hebrews 6:4-6. Rev. Ver.) Their sin would be wilful; for it would be "blasphemy against the holy Spirit."

Therefore only the church are on trial now. We who have been begotten of the holy Spirit are on trial for life or death eternal. Those who now die the second death will have no opportunity in the future. (Proverbs 21:16) If those now begotten of the holy Spirit are faithful, they will be granted to be members of the glorified bride of Christ. Those of the spirit-begotten who fail to attain a place in the bride class will, if overcomers, eventually receive life on a lower plane. They will be of the great company, the virgins who serve the bride. (Psalm 45:13, 15) But if they fail to attain either of these positions, all that remains for them is the second death.

As for the world, their day of judgment, as individuals, has not yet fully come. They are still in condemnation through father Adam—not recognized as having any rights at all. Some of the world are excellent people; but even these have neither part nor lot in the salvation of the present time. The blessed arrangement for them is in the Millennial age, when, if they yield full obedience to Jehovah's Anointed, their sins and their iniquities will be forgotten.

As the sins of the church are now canceled, so likewise will the whole world go absolutely free from the condemnation of Adam's sin; and they will have all the kingdom opportunities and privileges, if they accept of Christ, the great Mediator. Nevertheless, they will suffer stripes, as a result of the deeds done in the present life—not as a punishment for their sins, which have during that time all been remitted, but because of the habits previously formed, the character developed; for the weaknesses of the fallen nature will have left wounds, which will require more or less rigorous treatment in order to their healing. With the world it will then be true, as now with the church, that if they shall sin against the spirit of holiness, the holy Spirit knowingly and wilfully, the penalty will be a second condemnation—to the second death, destruction.

While our Lord Jesus said that all manner of sin would be forgiven except blasphemy against the holy Spirit, yet the Pharisees, to whom these words were addressed, could not commit this sin, because they had not the fulness of knowledge.—Matthew 12:31, 32; Acts 3:17.

FORGIVENESS OF ADAMIC SIN ABSOLUTE

When God recognizes the satisfaction of justice and cleans the slate for the sinner race, this does not mean that he has merely transferred the account to Jesus, who will hold it against them. Our Lord will not hold against mankind the things which the Father has forgotten. On the contrary, as the Representative of the Father, the Lord Jesus will be glad to give to men the benefit of that forgiveness, merely holding them at a distance from the Father during the period of their imperfection, standing between as Mediator, to give whosoever will of mankind time for restoration, development of character, etc., and taking away the stoniness of their hearts and giving them hearts of flesh.

The Lord through the prophet says, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." The Apostle Paul calls attention to this statement. He points out that under the Law Covenant this was not done, but that the sins remained; for although atonement was made afresh for Israel year by year, nevertheless the inferior sacrifices could not take away sin. (Hebrews 8:10-12; 10:1-4, 16, 17) This New Covenant in Christ, however, will absolutely take away sins. See Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:25-29. When mankind becomes a part of Israel, the promises made to Jews will apply to Gentiles also.

"PRINCES IN ALL THE EARTH"

The Scriptures tell us that "out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem." (Isaiah 2:3; Micah 4:2) When the kingdom is set up the ancient worthies will be made "princes in all the earth." (Psalm 45:16) This arrangement will appeal first and primarily to the Jew, who would naturally be the first to come under the new regulations. We may not say that all the Jews will do so, but that this will be true of at least a considerable number of them. In time others of the world will join. There are many well-meaning people who have not taken the vow of consecration to the Lord, but who would like to help rather than to hinder others. Such will in due time attach themselves to the kingdom, which shall be "the desire of all nations."—Haggai 2:7.

In the case of the ancient worthies, the earthly "princes," their freedom from imperfection will make them conspicuous amongst mankind. As the world come to know about these, they will say, "Are not these God's people?" Mankind will perceive that God has rewarded the ancient worthies by giving them an instantaneous resurrection to perfect life, and will

learn that their "better resurrection" was given because of faithfulness in the past.

EXPIATION OF WILFUL SIN

Our Lord Jesus, having laid down the ransom price for the sins of the whole world, has placed it in the hands of Justice as a deposit, to be held during this Gospel age for the benefit of the church class. At the end of this age he will apply it to the cancelation of the claims of Justice against Adam, which will include all sins due to the fall. Jehovah God will accept the price and will remit the Adamic sins. There will be some sins, however, which will not be covered by this great Sin-offering. These are wilful sins committed by members of the race. As wilful sins are not covered by the Sin-offering, but only Adam's sin and those sins resulting from Adamic weakness, God has mercifully arranged that the sufferings of the great company class, the "scape-goat" class, necessary to the destruction of their flesh, which they had covenanted to sacrifice, will be utilized as an expiation—not as a sin-offering—for these wilful sins of the world.—Leviticus 16:8, 10, 20-22.

When the great company shall have finished their course, the Atonement for sin shall have been fully accomplished, and the account against the world upon the books of Justice shall have been fully squared. Divine condemnation will be entirely lifted from the race, the new covenant of blessing will then be inaugurated. Then it will be the part of the people to come up to the requirements of the New Covenant, by earnestly striving to do their best. If, however, because of imperfection they unwittingly violate God's Law during the Mediatorial reign, they will not be amenable to that law; for the Mediator will stand between them and that law.

COVENANT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD CONDITIONAL

The Mediator will not, as we have said, hold against any one the transgressions of this present life. But it will require long, patient effort to regain the perfection from which the first parents of the race fell. Some of mankind have fallen much further down than others, because of having inherited greater depravity, or because of a more perverse disposition and of a less effort to control their fallen nature. But under the gracious arrangements of the New Covenant, the great Mediator purposes to grant the necessary assistance, by helping the people individually to understand the requirements of the new arrangement, by promptly punishing any attempt to do wrong, by rewarding every effort to do right, and by supplying strength, physical and mental, to meet the requirements of his righteous rule.

By the close of the Mediatorial reign those who respond and make earnest efforts to advance, will be brought to a condition of human perfection and of covenant relationship with Jehovah, as was Adam at the beginning. Then they must be subjected to the same test of loyalty as was Adam, with no mediator between them and God's justice. How many will maintain that relationship, and how many will lose it and suffer destruction, we cannot know. That some will prove unworthy of life and meet this extreme penalty of wilful sin—the second death—is clearly shown. See Revelation 20:7-9; 22:14, 15.

The ancient worthies are to be at the head of the earthly phase of the kingdom. They will form its nucleus, ruling under the glorified church, which will be invisible. These worthies cannot come forth from the tomb until divine justice has been satisfied for the world; for they also were members of the fallen race. After the Mediator has made this satisfaction, the ancient worthies will be the first to be blessed by the New Covenant, and will be raised from the dead as perfect men, in the image of God, as Adam was originally created. In their resurrection they will receive complete restitution to human perfection; for during their previous lifetime "they had this testimony, that they pleased God."—Hebrews 11:5.

Soon after the awakening of their faithful prophets of old, the Jews then living who still retain their faith in the New Covenant promises made to them (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:7-12), and who have waited for their Messiah, will begin to see clearly, and will join themselves to these ancient worthies. Then the world will gradually come to see, and will also come under the terms of Israel's New Law Covenant by becoming a part of Israel, a part of Abraham's earthly seed.—Romans 4:17, 18; Isaiah 49:6-12.

Covenant relationship with God means perfection, either actual or reckoned. During the thousand years of Messiah's kingdom, mankind will be approaching actual perfection. But they will not enter into it as a race until the close of the thousand years. Then the Mediator will turn them over to God; and they will be privileged to enter into covenant relationship with him, and must stand or fall individually. As we read, at that time Satan shall be "loosed for a little season"; and all who love unrighteousness in their hearts, whatever

has been their outward course during their trial time, will be manifested. They will be deceived by the adversary. "These shall go away into everlasting punishment [Greek, kolasis, cutting off or cutting short], and the righteous into life eternal." (Matthew 25:46) The one class passes into life; while the other class is cut off, restrained, from life. The reward of the righteous will be everlasting life; the reward of the wicked—"the devil and his angels," his messengers, all who are of his spirit—will be everlasting death—destruction. Those who are of the Millennial "sheep" class, who go to the King's right hand of favor, will, after the final testing at the hands of God, enter upon the ages of glory beyond, the blessings of which are not revealed in the Scriptures.

THE CHURCH NOT UNDER NEW COVENANT

The church of Christ is not under the New Covenant. Therefore it is not proper to speak of the church as being blessed by this covenant, although the church receives a great blessing and privilege in respect to it. If there were to be no New Covenant, there would then be no need of a Mediator, and no need of the "better sacrifices" whereby it is to be instituted.

St. Paul's statement that God has made the church "able ministers of the New Covenant" indicates that the Lord's people have something to do with its preparation. (2 Corinthians 3:6) Unless there were the "better sacrifices," there would be no basis for that New Covenant. The sufferings which the church undergo at this present time are a blessed privilege to us; for we are ministers of that New Covenant in the sense that we are serving it by training for future service, for service after it shall have been inaugurated.

While a great building is in process of erection, the men working upon its construction might be said to be greatly benefited by that building. That would not mean that they would be benefited by the use of it in the future, but that they were being benefited during its construction. So now the church receives certain rich blessings and privileges in connection with the New Covenant. Later, the entire world will be blessed by it, in a different way.

During this Gospel age, God is dealing merely with the church, not with the world. There is, however, some resemblance between the divine blessings now coming upon the church and those coming upon the world by and by. Then, the Lord will rewrite his law in the hearts of mankind, as it was originally written in Adam's heart; and men will have new hearts. At the end of the thousand years all mankind will be fleshly images of God, and ready for their final testing; for those who have refused to make progress to perfection will have been destroyed during the Messianic reign. But the church have new hearts now, right views of things, right sentiments. In the case of the church, however, there is not a taking away of the stoniness of heart and a making of it a heart of flesh; but there is an entirely new nature. This new nature of course has something to do with the flesh; for the flesh is now the servant of the new creature. The law of God is recognized in the flesh, under the compulsion of the new creature. **GIFT OF THE CHRIST TO THE WORLD**

The New Covenant, with all that goes with it, is the blessing which the Christ gives to mankind. It is God's Covenant; and he has arranged that it shall go to the world through this Christ class, Head and body. If, then, the church are to give these blessings, they must first have had them. No man can give away what he does not first possess. This thought that the New Covenant is a testament, or gift, of Christ to the world is made very prominent in the Scriptures. It is a gift in which the church shares; for every member has relinquished his restitution rights with Christ. "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him; if we be dead with him, we shall live with him," and all things are ours because we are his.—2 Timothy 2:11, 12.

These glorious things are clearly set forth in various types in the Old Testament, as well as plainly stated in the New Testament. For instance, St. Paul explains that Isaac, the heir of Abraham, was a type of the Christ, Head and body. Isaac did not receive his inheritance by a new covenant, but by the original covenant with Abraham, as does the church.—Galatians 3:8, 16, 29; 4:22-28.

In Micah 4:1-4, we read that "in the last days, the mountain [kingdom] of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains [kingdoms of earth], and many people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths." The succeeding verses of the chapter depict the influence that will be exerted. The blessings and prosperity will then be with those who will be in harmony with God.

Now it is different. "All that will live godly in Christ

Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Timothy 3:12) They "shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." (Matthew 5:11) These things indicate that all who are faithful to God during the present age will have more hardship than do those who are unfaithful. Many of the worldly, even the wicked of the world, have great prosperity in the present time. The world think that Christians, true followers of Jesus, are making their lives miserable by the course which they pursue. But the world is greatly mistaken in this matter. On the contrary, we are enjoying ourselves greatly; we are having a good time! We have much advantage every way, in spite of our afflictions; for we know that in a very little while our trials and afflictions will all be over, that the glori-

ous Kingdom of Messiah in which, if faithful, we are to share, is about to be set up in the earth.

In the future dispensation, God tells us, the tables will be turned. None of the wicked will prosper. THEN whoever is unrighteous shall suffer, and whoever does righteously shall receive a blessing. (Psalm 37:1, 2, 7-17, 22) Very often now the wicked prosper, and the poor and needy and the good of earth are oppressed. When the times of restitution come to the world, all will be changed. The blessing will be of God; and the only way to gain that blessing will be by coming into harmony with the new order of things in the kingdom of Messiah.

PERSECUTION AN AID TO CHRISTIAN CHARACTER CRYSTALLIZATION

"All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—2 Timothy 3:12.

Persecution is a word that primarily means the infliction of an injury as a punishment for adherence to some opinion or course of conduct which cannot properly be regarded as criminal; such as a religious creed or mode of worship. Not all who have been persecuted have been hanged or crucified or burned at the stake, however. Some have been persecuted by being put into prison; others have been persecuted by bitter words, which the Scriptures liken to arrows shot out by the wicked. (Psalm 64:2-4) Although with the advance of civilization matters have changed considerably, nevertheless the statement of our text is still true. Adventists, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians and others have in turn been persecuted for their religious beliefs. These persecutions have taken various forms; sometimes they were public whippings, etc.

We are now living in a day when gross, vile persecution is not so popular as in olden times. Today public sentiment is too high for any one to attempt such persecutions as Nero practised; such as throwing to the lions or other wild beasts those who incurred his ill-will. Nor will it permit the putting to death of those who differ from popular creeds as to the interpretation of the Scriptures, or who hold different opinions along other lines of thought or practise. But nevertheless persecution continues to be practised in various more refined forms. There is a kind of social boycott which is popular. People will separate from their company those who think differently from themselves along religious lines, and will have nothing to do with all such. They will cast out the names of such as being evil, and will speak lightly of even their best endeavors to live as consistent Christians.

In our text the Apostle declares that some form of persecution will attach to any one who would live a godly life. He explains that the infliction of injury might come directly upon an individual, or he might suffer indirectly by being associated with those who are persecuted. (Hebrews 10:32-34) Here he shows that those who become companions of those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake are themselves also suffering persecution. Other Scriptures indicate the same thought. "Whether one member [of the body of Christ] suffer, all the members suffer with it." (1 Corinthians 12:26) Whatever injury is done to one will affect all who are of the same class, not only in the way of arousing their sympathies and causing them mental pain, but also in their being associated with the class thus treated and sharing in the contumely to which they are subject.

Having seen what persecution includes, and knowing that all who would be acceptable to God must endure it in some measure, we remember that St. John said, "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you," and that the Master assured his disciples of what they would have to share as his disciples, saying, "Ye shall be hated of all men for my sake." (1 John 3:13; Matthew 10:22) In a general way everybody belonging to the world is in opposition to the Lord's people—everybody who might be included in the world, everybody who might be worth anything, everybody whose opinion is valued by the world, everybody who is honorable in the eyes of the world.

WHAT CONSTITUTES GODLY LIVING

To live godly means to live after the manner which God would approve, to live in opposition to sin and in harmony with righteousness, endeavoring to do that which is right, that which is in accord with the divine law—practising the Golden Rule, doing unto our neighbor as we would wish done unto ourselves.

In the world there are two companies; one under the banner of Satan, and the other under the banner of God. The first class is of darkness, of sin, over whom the prince of darkness has an influence. The other class serve the right. Whoever walks in the light of the Word of God will find that the darkness opposes the light. Nevertheless, we who are under the Lord's banner are to walk in the light. Our Lord exhorted

us to let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven. In other words, we are to let the world see what godly living means.

In some respects the world has attained to a very good standard. The laws of the civilized world have been just. We are glad that we are living in a time when the laws are so just; we are glad to have these special favors that belong, we believe, to our day more than to any previous day. At the same time there is on the part of many an endeavor to avoid the spirit of the divine law. Because of the selfishness which prevails in the world, there is a disposition to take advantage of a neighbor, to cheat him, to take from him more than is right, to give him less than is just. In a general way, therefore, whoever stands for what is right will find himself in conflict with the majority of people. If he adheres closely to principle the greater number will be against him, will esteem him to be a mean man, hard to get along with, etc. Those who are of the darkness hate those who are of the light. There is a feeling of condemnation which the world experiences when in the presence of the godly. They are never comfortable when such persons are present. This is not because the godly ever do to them wrong, but because they recognize the fact that the godly maintain a higher standard of living than do they.

LIVING GODLY IN CHRIST JESUS

To live godly in Christ Jesus means much more than merely the keeping of the Ten Commandments. Not to blaspheme, not to do harm to another, etc., is to be on the right side. But to live godly in Christ Jesus is something far beyond this. The Leader, the Head, of the church laid down his life in self-sacrifice; and those who are seeking to follow his example are also sacrificing their earthly interests, they are ambassadors for God, and therefore will proclaim his kingdom which is soon to be established—set up—in the earth. The message of the kingdom will necessarily be out of harmony with all others.

Those who proclaim God's message of the coming kingdom will be opposed by those who claim that the kingdom is already here. They will also be opposed by those who say, "Why do you not get out and do slum work? The present social order is very well established. We are trying to make the people see that God's kingdom is already in power. We are trying to lift the churches to a higher level and to do those things which will make a greater outward show, and which will deeply impress the people. But if you continue to talk about higher conditions, etc., you will put us in a bad light before the world, and will gain nothing by so doing; for they will merely think that you are unbalanced."

So those who would live godly in Christ Jesus have a narrow path to travel, a difficult way. This is because they are going contrary to nominalism, contrary to all the things of the world, contrary to the devil. Those who faithfully pursue this course bring tribulation upon themselves—the persecution to which our text refers. But all who are loyal to God and to the truth must thus suffer. They must expect persecution; for doubtless they will receive it until the last member of the church shall have finished his course in death. Whoever submits patiently to this opposition must not only sacrifice his natural preferences for the friendship of the world and for the pleasures of the present life, but he must learn to endure hardness in whatever shape it may come, while he is endeavoring to do the Lord's will and his work of advancing the interests of his kingdom.

In order to be really in the service of the Lord we must study carefully and continually his plan of the ages, in order to imbibe its spirit of loving self-sacrifice and to possess an enthusiastic zeal for its accomplishment. Moreover, we must be active to the extent of our ability, in its service, at whatever cost that activity may require. This course will bring persecution upon us, as the Apostle has foretold in our text. Our

Lord Jesus Christ suffered on this account; and as the Scriptures explain, his people are called upon to suffer with him, in order that after a while they shall reign with him in glory.

WHY PERSECUTION IS PERMITTED

The word suffer as used in our text has the significance of experience. That is, those who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall experience persecution as a part of their lot. This persecution may be of one kind or of another kind, according to circumstances. Sometimes it will result in mental suffering; at other times it will produce physical pain. Sometimes it will cause very severe suffering, protracted anguish; at other times the anguish will be less agonizing. But the persecution will be there in either case. Those who have come into Christ are enabled to live above the conditions, however. Those who have become members of the body of Christ have become such by full consecration to God and by the begetting of his holy Spirit. On this account they belong to this special class that "will live godly in Christ Jesus." For them to live godly means to live according to the standard which God has set for his people in his Word.

There are others than Christians who may be said to live a pious life. Even among the heathen there are people who devote their lives to some lines which they consider to be pious; and they are morally good people. Likewise in civilized lands there are people who live moral, upright lives, and to that extent godly lives—lives of which God would approve. Some of the human race are less fallen than are others; and this class find it natural to live better lives than would those who are more injured by the Adamic fall. Therefore amongst the worldly there are worthy men and women who are highly esteemed. For instance, Stephen Girard, of Philadelphia, is reputed to have been a very just man and to have given much alms to the poor. He provided Girard College, an institution for the support and education of poor fatherless white boys, where they were admitted between the ages of six to ten years, and received an education and learned a trade, that they might support themselves honestly.

History affords many examples of upright men and women who have done much for the betterment of humanity. All these were godly in that they avoided the practise of sin and that they had an appreciation for truth, honesty and the character of God. But we do not hear that these people were persecuted for their morality. The world can appreciate that condition of things. But those who come into the body of Christ are permitted of the Lord to have a certain amount of persecution in order for their development. The apostles were noble characters; yet they suffered persecution, even as did our Lord himself. Evidently, therefore, it is the will of God that those in Christ should thus suffer, in order that their characters may be developed and that they may be prepared for the great work of the future, when all who endure faithfully shall reign with Christ Jesus their Lord.

THE BLESSING FOR THOSE WHO OBEY

We would naturally expect that those who came into relationship with God under the special covenant arrangement of this Gospel age would be immune from suffering and persecution—that all such would be well thought of by the world.

THE CHRIST—"THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF JEHOVAH"

"Thou shalt be called by a new name; . . . thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God."—Isaiah 62:2, 3.

The context seems to refer this statement to Jerusalem. But we realize that the old Jerusalem was merely a type of the New Jerusalem; the old Zion was a type of the new Zion. The New Jerusalem, the new Zion, will be the church in glory. This church is pictured in Revelation as "the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband"—gloriously arrayed. This is one picture of the church, representing her queenly position. (Psalm 45:9) The New Jerusalem is spoken of as "the bride, the Lamb's wife." (Revelation 21:2, 9-11) The power and the glory of the Lamb are to be manifested in the Messianic kingdom.

The Scriptures indicate that the name Jerusalem is to take on a new meaning; that the type is to give place to the anti-type. This does not mean that the literal Jerusalem will no longer exist; for we understand that it is to be greater in the future than it ever was in the past, that it is indeed to be the world's capital when the new age is inaugurated. But there is to be a far greater and grander Jerusalem—the heavenly Jerusalem, the New Jerusalem. The New Jerusalem is to be the City of Peace, which signifies the blessed or peaceful government. As Jesus is spoken of as the Prince of Peace, as he is the antitypical King of Salem, King of peace (Hebrews 7:2), his kingdom is very properly spoken of as the kingdom of peace.

But the Scriptures inform us that this would be a wrong expectation. For thousands of years the world has held in esteem a religious class of worldly people and has not persecuted them. Even back in the days of the Babylonian Empire the priestly class were regarded as very sacred. In our own day there are priests and preachers in the nominal church who are highly esteemed amongst men and who are not persecuted. But everywhere the Scriptures call our attention to the fact that those who belong to the royal priesthood will suffer persecution if they live godly, and that whoever amongst this class does not thus suffer has evidence that he is not living godly.

The conditions imposed upon the church are designed by the Lord to be crucial tests of LOYALTY to him and to the principles of righteousness. Trials, difficulties and persecutions are useful in demonstrating whether our covenant of consecration is really from the heart. Those who have made merely a lip covenant will in due time be sifted out, manifested, separated from those who have covenanted from the heart to be dead with Christ. These the Lord purposes to make joint-heirs in the kingdom with his well-beloved Son, our Lord Jesus. It is for this reason that the call of the church takes place during this present age, while evil is still permitted to reign in the world, and while the majority of mankind are under the blinding influences of the adversary, who is not yet bound.

As our Lord Jesus explained, the darkness of sin and error is in direct antagonism to the light of truth; and consequently, when his people let their light shine, the effect upon the darkened world is that opposition is aroused, for the light makes manifest the evils of darkness which otherwise would not appear, and thus disturbs those who are in sympathy with darkness. As a consequence, this latter class hate the light, and either publicly or privately oppose the children of the light, the light-bearers. Even those who have gotten out of the extreme darkness of moral pollution into the twilight of moral reformation cannot endure the clear, searching light of the true Gospel, but such prefer a measure of darkness.—John 3:19-21; 2 Corinthians 4:4-6.

We can sympathize with those who see nothing of the light of the glorious character of our God. We can also sympathize with those who see a little and who strive toward moral and other reforms, striving in various ways for sectarian prosperity rather than for the upbuilding of the saints, "the church of the living God," those whose names are written in heaven. We should have patience with all such who give evidence that they are laboring in harmony with their convictions; for whoever is engaged in good work of any kind will surely obtain a blessing as a result. But the true church is laboring, not merely for a blessing, but for THE blessing—"the PRIZE of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:14) Let all, then, who see the prize, and who see the light of the glory of God as it shines in the face of our Lord Jesus Christ, be faithful to the terms, conditions, of their covenant of sacrifice; for all who are faithful unto death have the glorious promise that they shall receive the crown of life—immortality.—Revelation 2:10.

"This is the name whereby he [Christ] shall be called: The Lord our righteousness." The same statement is made in respect to the church: "The Lord our righteousness." (Jeremiah 23:5, 6; 33:15, 16) But this expression, "The Lord our righteousness," does not give us the proper thought of the original, which would be better translated, "Our righteousness of Jehovah." See SCRIPTURE STUDIES, Vol. 5, p. 42. The Christ, Head and body, will be called the Righteousness of God, the One from whom the world will receive their righteousness, their deliverance from sin and death, the one whom God will approve as being the standard of righteousness.

THE CHURCH'S FUTURE GLORY

We must not forget that Christ Jesus is the Head of the church, the most important member in the body, just as the head is the most important member in the human body. The church beyond the veil will be a special manifestation of the glory of God—something which the angels will behold and will see is especially approved of God; something for mankind to take note of, as the ones whom God delights to honor. God will make known his church to the world. "Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess" to this standard of righteousness which Jehovah will set up.

"Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of Jehovah, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God"—not in the

hand of our Lord Jesus, but in the hand of the Father. (Isaiah 62:3) Jesus and the church together, in this picture, will be the "crown of glory." The word crown signifies the top, whether it be the crown of a building or of the head or whatever. Upon their crowns the kings of the earth have spent much wealth. All the great monarchs of Europe have the finest of diamonds in their crowns. On state occasions these jewels are brought forth, as representing the wealth of the sovereign who wears the crown.

We are not to think, however, that Jehovah is to bring forth the crown in order to wear it himself, as though he would do himself honor in this way. The crown, the diadem, is said to be in the hand of Jehovah. Nothing is to be a crown to Jehovah. He himself is the abundance of that which filleth all things. Nothing could add to his glory of person or to his riches. He is the great One, the almighty One, from whom proceeds all good—all perfection, all blessing. Instead of wearing this diadem upon his head, he holds it in his hand, exhibiting it. In this way the glory and beauty of it are displayed. It is not to be hidden away, but is to be brought forth to the world, and held up to their view.

GLORY TO LAST THROUGHOUT ALL AGES

To hold a crown in one's hand would be to show it, to let the light shine upon it—to move it about so that its beauty,

its colors and its lustre will be discerned by all. The hand represents power. This diadem in God's hand will be exhibited throughout all eternity, and will be shown to all the different worlds of the great Universe. These countless millions of worlds are to be inhabited. God's Word declares of the earth: "He created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited." (Isaiah 45:18) Here the thought is implied that just as surely as worlds are created they are created to be inhabited. God would not create a world or a sun unless he had use for it; for he never does anything in vain.

As the Father has used the Son always, in all of his mighty works, so he still purposes to all eternity to use the Son. He has exalted Jesus to the very highest plane, the place next to himself. He has also been gathering out through this Gospel age a church, to be associated with Christ in all his great and honored work. He is choosing those who have Jesus' spirit, who have been glad to lay down their lives with him, in devotion to righteousness, to truth. God is pleased with these. This will be the new name whereby she, the glorified church, shall be known hereafter—"The Righteousness of Jehovah"—the illustration of what he most highly approves. The name of the bridegroom is given to the bride. And all who get Christ's new name, we may be sure, will be called upon to demonstrate that they are overcomers. They must all meet the approval of the Lord our God.

ABRAHAM GIVING ISAAC TO GOD

[This article was a reprint of that published in issue of February 1, 1913, under title "Abraham's Faith Tested," which please see.]

ISAAC AND REBECCA

[The first four paragraphs of this article were reprinted from the article entitled, "Isaac's Peaceful Career," published in issue of March 1, 1907. The remainder was a reprint of the article entitled, "A Peculiar Marriage," published in issue of February 15, 1913. Please see the articles named.]

A little while! 'Tis ever drawing nearer—
The brighter dawning of that glorious day.
Blest Savior, make our spirits' vision clearer,
And guide, O guide us in the shining way!

A little while, O blessed expectation!
For strength to run with patience, Lord, we cry.
Our hearts up-leap in fond anticipation;
Our union with the Bridegroom draweth nigh.

GOD'S GUIDANCE OF THE AFFAIRS OF HIS SAINTS

"My times are in thy hand."—Psalm 31:15.

In the above words the Psalmist no doubt spoke in a primary sense for himself. He had consecrated his life to God—not in the same way as does the Christian, but nevertheless as fully as was possible for any one in his time. All of his interests he placed in the hands of the Lord; and in the many and varied experiences of his eventful life his confidence in Jehovah never failed. David had strong faith, and the many beautiful and touching expressions of his faith have through all the centuries since his day been an inspiration and blessing to the saints of God. In times of his greatest trials and afflictions—and he had many—his trust in the Lord remained steadfast and firm. He was one of God's heroes, and his name appears on the roll of honor read to us by the Apostle Paul in Hebrews 11.

But we may assume that in a special way King David spoke prophetically for the Christ, Head and body: for "holy men of old spake as they were moved by the holy Spirit": and we know that their utterances were especially "for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come," and more or less for the saints throughout the Gospel age. The Psalm from which our text is taken is a very precious one, and seems to be peculiarly applicable to the spirit-begotten children of the Lord. Verse 5, we remember, gives the dying words of our dear Redeemer. The saints of this age are a particularly consecrated class, with clear knowledge of the purpose of their consecration, this being the time during which Christ and the church have been called out to prepare for a glorious work yet to be inaugurated by Jehovah.

The word "times" has here the sense of years. The Scriptures speak of the times of restitution, the times of the Gentiles, and the seven times of Israel's chastisement under the Gentile kingdoms. The term "my times" would mean all my years, including the thought of all my interests, the use of all my talents, my opportunities for service, during these years—all that might be mine to use for the Lord during the period of my consecrated life. As children of the heavenly King we have placed in his hands our every interest, in trust, in faith, in obedience, in consecration.

THE SCOPE OF OUR TEXT

Invited of Jehovah to become members of his family, we have gladly accepted his invitation, counting all the things of this life as loss and dross that we might gain the glorious

prize held out to us by our God. He has made us new creatures in Christ Jesus—beings of an entirely new order. He has called us with his Son to a plane of life, the capacities, the powers and the glories of which far outrank those of all others of God's creation. We may thus have the assurance that since we have accepted his marvelous offer, and have placed ourselves fully in his hands, he will give the most careful attention to our training, development and preparation for the high exaltation to which he has called us in Christ. This he has pledged himself to do. He assures us that "all things are ours," because we are his, in this peculiar and pre-eminent sense.

So "our times are in his hands"—our Father's hands—and he will overrule all the affairs of our life for our good and our unbuilding, so as to prepare us for the glorious conditions to which he has invited us. This does not mean, however, that our times are so entirely out of our own hands as to be beyond our control. We are made very largely controllers of our own destiny. The Lord neither compels nor coerces our will. He leaves it to us to will and to do according to his good pleasure, although he works in us to that end, after we have become his. Our times are in his hands to the extent that we are faithful to our covenant, to the extent that our trust is in him.

If at any time, however, we allow self-will to actuate us, and are not entirely obedient and in cheerful harmony with his will, if we ever desire our own will or way and yield in the slightest degree to a spirit of rebellion, to that extent we are taking ourselves out of his hands; and the result will be our spiritual loss and the hiding from us to the same extent the smile of the Father's face. And we shall be permitted to do this if we choose, though his loving hand will follow us and administer necessary stripes to bring us back, that we stray not out of the fold. The true child of God should exercise great care and watchfulness that he may keep in closest touch with the Lord, that no earth-born cloud shall separate him from the Father's favor to any extent; for any wandering from God endangers the life of the new creature, and every yielding to the impulses of the old nature makes easier a further yielding.

The having of our times in God's hands, under his protection, began with us when we made our full surrender to him in consecration. There we gave him our all, there we submitted

ourselves and became dead to the will of the flesh and alive to the will of God. There the new life in Christ began.

THE CHILDREN OF THE SAINTS

While, as we have said, the time of our consecration was particularly the time when we came into the Lord's hands, there is a sense in which some of us were in the Lord's hands before we made a personal consecration to him. Some had consecrated parents; and because of this our times, our interests, while we were children, were in God's hands, in his care and keeping, under his protection and guidance, in a sense that the interests of the children of unbelievers would not be. The Apostle Paul tells us that if either one of the child's parents is consecrated, that child is under the special care of the Father.

This care of the child on account of the parent would seem to last only so long as the child is a minor. If, when he comes to years of discretion of mind, he should fail to make a personal consecration of himself to the Lord, he would no longer be counted as justified, and hence would no longer be under this special guidance and care. As he failed to place himself in the hands of God, failed to choose God for his guide, he would not wish the Lord to be his caretaker and instructor.

GOD'S "HAND" A TERM OF DEEP SIGNIFICANCE

The word "hand" has here a very beautiful significance. The hand is one of the most skilful and beautiful members of

our body. Our hands can be used in an almost infinite variety of ways. With our fingers we can handle, touch most deftly, most delicately, most artistically. The hand is related to all the services we render. So when the Scriptures speak of God's hand, the expression is very full of meaning. Jehovah is represented as "holding the seas in the hollow of his hand." "The heavens are the work of his hands." These expressions represent the great skill, power and majesty of the Almighty God. He tells us, his children, "I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands."—Isaiah 49:16.

So the assurance of the Word that all our times, our interests, all that concerns us, are in our Father's hand—that his power, his skill, is continually exercised on our behalf—is full of comfort and of deep significance to the saint of God, and shows how fully he controls every circumstance, every experience, for our welfare as new creatures, warding off all that would be harmful or injurious, overruling so as to bring us all the needed experiences and blessings. How blessed the assurance that no detail of our lives can fail to aid in the outworking of the glorious purposes of our God for us, if we are trustful and obedient children, and if his will is ever our will! As consecrated children of God, let us ever look for his leading in all the affairs of life. Let us never undertake anything, whether temporal or spiritual, without first seeking to discern the divine will in the matter. Thus we shall increase our confidence in his goodness and faithfulness.

THE HOST OF FAITHFUL WARRIORS

"Ten thousand times ten thousand
In sparkling raiment bright,
The army of the ransom'd saints
Throngs up the steps of light:
'Tis finished! all is finished,
Their fight with death and sin:
Fling open wide the golden gates,
And let the victors in.

"What rush of hallelujahs
Fills all the earth and sky!
What ringing of a thousand harps
Bespeaks the triumphs nigh!
O day for which creation
And all her plans were laid;
O joy for all its former woes,
A thousand-fold repaid!

"Oh, then what raptur'd greetings
On Canaan's happy shore;
What knitting sever'd friendships up
Where partings are no more!
Then eyes with joy shall sparkle
That brimm'd with tears of late;
No orphans there, nor fatherless,
Nor widows desolate.

"Bring near thy great salvation,
Thou Lamb for sinners slain;
Fill up the roll of thine elect.
Then take thy power, and reign:
Appear, Desire of Nations,
Thy people long for home:
Lo, in the heav'ns thy promised sign!
Thou, Savior, Prince, art come!"

LETTERS FROM BRETHREN

DESIRE TO UPHOLD OUR HANDS

DEAR BRETHREN:—

The church at Lynn voted to extend to the dear Bethel friends, through those brethren whom the Lord has placed in control of the affairs of the Society, their sympathy and love. We wish to assure you of our loyalty to the Lord and the Society. We desire to uphold your hands. May the Lord comfort and bless you as you seek to carry on the work which remains this side of the veil, and may he give us all an abundant entrance into his heavenly kingdom!

With much Christian love, THE LYNN ECCLESIA.—*Mass.*

LOVING WORDS FROM AN ASSEMBLY OF GOD'S PEOPLE

DEAR BRETHREN:—

On July 4 the Louisville church and surrounding classes met for a one day convention at Jeffersonton. We had a glorious day, thinking and talking about what the heavenly Father has in store for them that love him supremely. By unanimous vote I was requested to convey to you our love and to assure you that our prayers never cease to ascend on your behalf. You will be glad to know that we are continuing to do with our might whatever our hands find to do. Perfect harmony prevails among the brethren, and our meetings are going on as usual.

In conclusion, dear Brethren, remember that thousands of prayers ascend daily on your behalf, and that all power in heaven and on earth is in the hands of our Father, and that nothing can happen to his children without his permission. Oh, what a consolation this is! Courage for a little while longer: for we are nearing home.

Faithfully your brethren in the Lord,

Per W. H. D., Sec'y.

NEARING THE END OF THE WAY

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:

Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. In the special trials and tribulations through which you are passing we wish to assure you of the continued prayers of the St. Louis Ecclesia on your behalf. We

rejoice also on account of the inspiring example of love and patience you have set for all of the Lord's people.

Seeing now with our natural eyes so many of the things which we have long discerned by the eyes of faith, betokening the final features of the work on this side of the veil, we cannot fully express our gratitude to our dear heavenly Father for all his goodness to us. May he continue to keep you, dear Brethren, and to guide you along the remainder of the way. We wish that we might be nearer to you, so that we could minister to your physical needs somewhat, if possible. We ask an interest in your prayers, that we too may remain faithful unto the end.

THE ST. LOUIS ECCLESIA, by unanimous vote.

A LETTER TO THE BETHEL FAMILY

DEARLY BELOVED IN CHRIST:—

I take great pleasure in writing these few lines to you, to assure you, dear Brethren, that I am rejoicing in the Lord. In the truth and in all the experiences that I am having at this time. They are all great blessings to me. I know that you have been praying for me; and the Lord has answered your prayers on my behalf. I thank you all for your loving interest in me. What a blessed thought it is to know that our dear heavenly Father is taking care of us. He comforts us through his Word and by his dear people. Blessed be his holy name.

I cannot find words to express my gratitude to my dear heavenly Father for all his rich blessings toward me. It was about September, 1905, that the dear Lord sent a colporteur (Sister Mary L. Cobb) to Riverside, Conn., with Volume I, SCRIPTURE STUDIES, in Italian. Oh, what a blessing that was! For many years I had been a member of the nominal church (Baptist); but like all the rest I did not know anything about the wonderful plan of salvation of our dear heavenly Father for the world of mankind. But when my blind eyes were opened, then I saw the glorious truth of the goodness of God as it is presented by our beloved Brother Russell in the SCRIPTURE STUDIES: and of course I wanted to tell it to others,

so that they might also be blest. And so for more than twelve years I have been privileged to proclaim the glorious message of salvation to my poor countrymen (the Italians); and by the Lord's grace a good many hearts have been made glad, and are now rejoicing in the Lord in the truth and in the trials also.

And now, my dear Brethren, the Lord has permitted my liberty to be restrained for a while, or maybe altogether on this side of the veil. I am rejoicing, however, for the glorious prospect of the blessed work in our future estate, in the kingdom of our glorious Lord, for the restitution of the poor world of mankind who for more than six thousand years have been under the taskmaster Satan, and under his faithful co-workers, the clergy, who have made the world as a wilderness. —Isaiah 14:16, 17.

My association with you as a member of the Bethel for many years has been a very great blessing to me, for which I am truly thankful to the dear Lord. In a few days I expect to be taken to my new abiding place, the Federal Prison at Atlanta, for ten years. May the dear Lord's blessings be with you all, as you endeavor to serve him and his people in this trying time. "Let not your heart be troubled," dearly beloved. The Lord is our helper, and he will never forsake us. Remember me in your prayers, as I also remember you all.

With best wishes and love to you I remain

Your brother in Christ. GIOVANNI DE CECCA.

AN INTERESTING VISIT

DEAR BETHEL FAMILY:—

Love and greetings in the name of Him who does indeed make rich all who put their trust in Him! We have learned to put our trust in Him as never before, and never has he failed us. Every day he grows nearer and dearer to me!

Strenuous indeed has been each day since we came here; and not until now has there been time for messages, although our thoughts have been with you daily, our prayers also. I confess that you have been missed very keenly. I did not realize how closely our hearts had twined about dear Bethel and the loving family of God centered there.

We had a quiet, uneventful trip South, being very, very tired. On the way down I slept much of the time. Sister R— rested, but could not sleep during the daytime. At the station we were met by two of the brethren with their autos, and were taken to the home of the brother where we had engaged rooms. Here we were greeted by his family, and then ate an appetizing breakfast prepared for us in true Southern style. What a pleasant place the Lord had in readiness for us! We raised our hearts in thanksgiving. Best of all, we are with the Lord's own people.

In the afternoon we went out to see the brethren. The rules for visiting the Federal Prison are very strict, and necessarily so. Only the immediate relatives are permitted to visit prisoners, and then only once in two weeks. But being newcomers, and having just arrived from New York, we were privileged to see them for three successive days, having one hour's talk with them each time. Upon our arrival we were shown into a good-sized private room, where we greeted our dear ones and then were seated with a table between us, the guard meanwhile seated at the head of the table. We delivered all the good messages you dear ones had sent; and told them how they were loved and missed. Then we laughed at our husbands in their blue suits, broad-brimmed hats, etc., until they were cheered and rested by the little change. Both are looking and feeling well.

During our second interview we were granted more privileges than during the first. Of course we did not take advantage of these privileges. The Lord's people are law-abiding under all circumstances; else we could not truly be his people.

Some of the brethren have been assigned to the tailoring department. One of them made such good buttonholes that he was complimented by the head tailor. Some of the brethren room in pairs, together. This privilege is very much appreciated by them. The time goes very quickly. They are asking for no favors whatever, but quietly trying to obey every rule and trusting the Lord through every experience. Thus they are being greatly blessed. Everything is scrupulously clean. The food is plain, but plentiful.

The brethren all send love, and we join with them. May the Lord bless you and keep you under the shadow of his wing! The friends all send love to the Bethel family. "God be with you till we meet again."

Your sister in the Lord, L. T. VAN AMBURGH.

DIVINE GRACE EVER SUFFICIENT

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—

Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. We wish to use this opportunity

to express our heart-felt Christian love and sympathy, and to assure you of our appreciation of your loving service not only to us, but to all the dear saints still this side of the veil.

We do indeed thank our dear heavenly Father for the angel of Revelation 8:3, which came and stood at the altar and had a golden censer; and we wish by his grace to assure you of our loyal support and co-operation, and to encourage your hearts by calling to mind the loving words that divine grace is sufficient in every time of need, and that our Lord Jesus Christ is with us always, even unto the end of the age.

It is a comfort to us that even though we are separated in the flesh, yet we are all gathered together in "the secret place of the Most High," and are abiding under the shadow of him in whom is everlasting strength, and are trusting in the covert of his wings. We pray daily for you all, and for our brethren in bonds, two of whom it was our privilege to know and love personally for many years. May we all be faithful, waiting patiently on the Lord, that we may be ready when by his grace the door of service opens.

With much Christian love to all,

THE CHURCH AT SCRANTON.

ALL THINGS WORKING FOR OUR HIGHEST GOOD

DEAR BRETHREN:—

At our regular meeting a vote was taken, and carried unanimously, that the church send to the Bible House our love and greetings, and that we assure them of our continued support. We believe that the Lord is with you, and that all things will result in our highest good. We continue to pray for the dear ones at the Bible House every day.

Yours in Christian love,

THE BINGHAMTON CHURCH.—N. Y.

DAILY REJOICING IN THE LIGHT OF TRUTH

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—

After having been fifteen years in the truth, and thirteen years an Elder, having taken the Vow soon after it first came out, (but now for the first time informing you of that fact), a little explanation may be needful now, when I am sending in my answers to the V. D. M. questions. These questions I considered unnecessary, as the church, who elect their own elders, should ask and know what those about to be elected believe—especially as the questions do not include the covenants, the sin-offerings, etc.

Recently we thought, as Elders in Manchester, that it would help some members of our class to answer the questions, as a personal examination of belief, etc. This we could scarcely recommend, unless we all had ourselves so done. So I gladly fall in line, and I have been blessed in the answering. I trust that they are to your complete satisfaction.

Daily I rejoice in the beautiful rays of light that stream forth from the Word of God, through the STUDIES, TOWERS, etc. I am fully determined, by the grace of God, to hold fast; for I can see nothing better, look where I will. To my judgment no views of the Scriptures so beautifully exalt the Creator and so humble the creatures as the "Ransom for all" does. Having proved then for some fifteen years the power of the knowledge of the truth to be a magnet, drawing me nearer to God, the weaning influence from the world, giving victory over inbred sin, and an ever-deepening desire to be more Christ-like in spirit, I consider that I should be committing spiritual suicide were I to neglect the channel which God, by his holy Spirit, has so graciously used!

With warm Christian love and tender sympathy to you all at Bethel, and with the hope that we all may meet "at Home" in the morning, I am

Your brother under Christ Jesus, our Head,

J. W. W.—England.

PROMPTNESS AN ELEMENT OF CHARACTER

DEAR BRETHREN:—

There is a matter of which I wish to speak, yet hesitate to do so lest I should seem to be speaking evil of one of the Lord's people. Yet I feel that the matter is of grave importance; for it has to do with character development, and we are so near the goal of the church that we cannot afford even to seem to come short in any respect. It is this:

Our leader is a very fine brother in many respects, but he has the serious fault of seldom being on time at meetings. On some occasions he arrives as late as a whole hour after the time set for the meeting to begin. We love this brother dearly, and do not wish to offend him in the least. But we know of nothing else to do to awaken him to a sense of his deficiency in this respect. Will you kindly suggest something which may help him and us as well?

With Christian love, I remain

Yours in the Master's service.

OUR REPLY

The criticism in the above letter is one which has come to us from various classes. We hardly know just what sug-