

the body of Christ shall be complete—when the “elect” number shall be full—we understand there will be no additions to it, just as there will be no deficiency in that Body when it shall be glorified. This nature of glory, honor and immortality of the kingdom plane seems to appertain only to the Father, to the Son and to the “bride, the Lamb’s wife.” We know of nothing in the Scriptures nor in analogy that would imply that it could be shared by any others at any time; but of course what God has not clearly revealed we may not know of a certainty. We may be sure of one thing, however, and that is that Christ will always be “Head over the church which is his body”; that he will always be Head over all things.

Another thing we may be quite sure of is that the church thus honored by the Father as members of The Christ will have still other glories; as the Apostle declares, “that in the ages to come, God might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ” (Eph. 2:6, 7), implying not only that the glory of Christ is to be perpetual, but that the glory of the church is also to be perpetual—not confined to the Millennial age.

#### DOES THE DEGREE OF SUFFERING DETERMINE THE DEGREE OF REWARD?

We agree that our Lord’s statement respecting John the Baptist, “He that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he” (Luke 7:28), applies to the entire class of ancient worthies; and further, that it refers not merely to the earthly status of the Gospel church as being superior, but marks the church as a superior class in the future.

This question might arise: In view of the statement of the Apostle James, “Take, my brethren, the prophets, as an example of suffering affliction and of patience” (Jas. 5:10), and in view also of our Lord’s words referring to the suffering of the church, “So persecuted they the prophets which were before you,” and also of the detailed statement of these sufferings of the ancient worthies furnished us by the Apostle Paul (Hebrews 11), what should we say as to the degree of

their sufferings in comparison with those of the church and the reward that would justly be due them as compared with the reward of the church?

#### THE GOSPEL AGE THE “ACCEPTABLE DAY” FOR SACRIFICES

We answer that if the Lord intends to reward his people in proportion to their suffering, some of us seemingly will get a very small reward. We have neither been stoned to death, nor sawn asunder, nor have we wandered in sheepskins and goatskins; nor have we been without any place to lay our head. We might say, however, that some of our sufferings may be of a different kind from theirs: It is possible to endure figurative scorching or stoning, and to have our names cast out as evil, etc. But on the whole we cannot say that, so far as merit is concerned in the matter of suffering, there is any advantage that the church can claim over the ancient worthies even among those of our number who, in the early church, were burned as torches by Nero. It would seem that we must make allowance for divine “election”; that it pleased God to call us with this high calling. During the Millennial age even some may perhaps become as loyal to the principles of righteousness as any of the ancient worthies or any of the church, and yet not be rewarded with either their distinction or ours. We are favored, we believe, only in that we live at this particular time of blessing—the “acceptable day of the Lord”—in which the Lord is ready and willing to accept our sacrifices; and this acceptable day could not begin until our Lord Jesus had made his sacrifice and opened up “the new and living way,” whereby we might follow in his steps.

John the Baptist had a very honorable work to perform, but that work was to be accomplished before our Lord’s death and before the opening of this “acceptable day.” Therefore he could not be of the Gospel age church and did not come under our “high calling”—joint-heirship with our Lord in the kingdom of heaven.

## ATTENDING NOMINAL CHURCH SERVICES

We infer that our suggestion relative to attendance at nominal church services was not fully grasped by some of our readers. We had no thought to encourage membership in any human institution. We had no thought to encourage in any manner these institutions. We merely wished to suggest that some dear friends, in our judgment, incline to go to an extreme in that they fear to set foot inside nominal church edifices. Our thought is that these should be recognized as gathering places of those who profess some knowledge of and some love for our Savior—the world’s Savior. While we cannot agree with all that they stipulate in their creeds, we can sympathize with them in the sense that we realize how they got into the darkness and bondage they are in, because we were once in the same ourselves. We have reason to believe that some of them are as honest as were we.

Our suggestion is that while the first duty of the Lord’s

people who are in the light is to “forget not the assembling of themselves together”; while it is their duty to “build one another up in the most holy faith” and to “grow in grace” themselves; while, therefore, it is their duty to attend to their own spiritual nourishment by Scripture study, etc., nevertheless there may be times when nothing more important or more pressing or more opportune would present than a visit to some prayermeeting or other meeting of Christian friends of the nominal systems. Our suggestion was not so much that nominal churches should be attended, but rather that none of us should feel afraid to attend one if favorable opportunity offered, peradventure we might there find some truth-hungry, and some good might be accomplished. These remarks are specially applicable to such as have husbands or wives who would desire their company occasionally, and be willing in return to accompany them to Bible Students meetings.

## MEMBERS OF CHRIST’S HOUSEHOLD

The church of Christ is an aggregation of individuals which may be viewed from different standpoints. In the “Divine Plan of the Ages” we show on a chart the Gospel age and its various united elements. Above the line of consecration are two classes, representing the great company and the little flock. Below the line of consecration there is another class shown, the justified, who do not go on to complete their justification by consecration. Under the line or plane of justification is shown another class—hangers-on, denominated hypocrites. In the further development of the chart we show these last two classes—the justified, who do not go on to consecration, and the “tares” or hypocrites—both as falling away in this day of trouble, called the time of the harvest, being separated from the spiritual classes, the little flock and the great company.

However, during the Gospel age, the “wheat” and the “tares” grow together, and together they represent the kingdom of God, as the Lord Jesus shows in the parable. (Matthew 13) In other words, God speaks of the church as a whole, including in the appellation the baser adherents as well as the fully consecrated.

This is shown again in Revelation, where the Lord addresses the Laodicean church, “Be zealous, therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock.” (Rev. 3:19, 20) He thus indicates that from his viewpoint, which is all wisdom, he

discerns in his church what we may perhaps partially discern, but could not definitely determine and would not be allowed to specify. He sees, he determines, which are the fully consecrated, and which are not fully consecrated. We could ascertain that condition only by inquiry of the individual, and even then if he chose to misrepresent his position and to claim that he is a consecrated believer, we should not be in a position to judge him or decide against his expression, except his fruitage betray his words; as the Lord says, “By their fruits shall ye know them”—not merely by their professions, but by their fruits. But aside from any fruits that would be injurious, we are to accept the profession of all who claim to be believers and consecrated. Hence, if there is an election in the church, in which only the consecrated would be invited to participate—and if there are any whose outward conduct is moral and who make profession of being consecrated—it would not be within our province to sit in judgment upon them and condemn them and say that they are not of the church. Rather we should be obligated to accept their vote the same as any other.

#### THOSE WHO CONSTITUTE THE CHURCH OF THE PRESENT TIME

In a complimentary sense all believers in Christ, who are approaching the Lord and who have turned from the world and have professed to have fellowship with God’s consecrated people

and who are giving indications of progress in that direction, and to whom the Lord is drawing near, may be considered probationary members of the church. So the Lord says unto these, "Draw nigh unto me, and I will draw nigh unto you." (Jas. 4:8) If they come together, then, with the Lord's people, the result may be their full consecration to the Lord and their begetting of the holy Spirit, thereby constituting them new creatures in Christ. If they fail to go on, they fail to obtain full justification and the seal of sonship and covenant relationship with the Lord. Such will eventually be discarded entirely. The harvest and the sifting process—the winnowing of the "chaff" from the "wheat"—will blow these away, as the Lord represented in the parable, and they will no longer even pretend to be of the true church. The line of demarcation, before the close of the harvest time, will become so distinct that it will leave no question as to who are and who are not of the church.

Coming down, then, more particularly to the difference between "the more than conquerors," the "Little Flock," and the conquerors, the "great company," we recognize both of these as being of the church of Christ, both as being represented in the original and preliminary type of the church, viz., the Passover. On that night of passing over, which typified this Gospel age and the passing over of "the church of the first-borns," we find that all the first-born of Israel were passed over, and that subsequently the Lord exchanged these first-borns for the tribe of Levi, including not only the first-born of every family of that tribe, but all the Levites; and so all of the Levite class are passed over. And the types further show us that both the little flock, the royal priesthood, and the great company, the antitypical Levites, are "the household of faith," both constituting the "church of the first-born, which are written in heaven" (Hebrews 12:23); and, if not blotted out, their names will continue there, and they will have part in the heavenly inheritance.

#### THE ANTITYPICAL TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL

The share of each of the above classes in the heavenly inheritance is shown in Revelation 7, where, first, the little flock is spoken of as constituting Israel—the twelve tribes of Israel. Those of the Jewish nation who maintained their relationship with God were not broken off from that position, but instead, were transferred from natural Israel and became the nucleus of spiritual Israel. Inasmuch as this left many of the designated number yet to be provided for, God arranged, as had been shown through the prophets would be done, that the deficiency should be supplied from amongst the Gentiles. So, then, the work of this Gospel age has been to fill up those twelve tribes with Gentiles to take the places of the Jews who were broken off from that special place or plane of privilege. And we, if we make our calling and election sure, shall be of these twelve tribes, though we may not know to which tribe we shall be assigned.

To illustrate: A man enlisted here in New York for military service might be sent to one or another of the different regiments to be filled up from time to time; so with us. The Lord in his providence fills up these tribes of Israel, the whole number being stipulated to be 12,000 for each tribe, or 144,000 altogether. It might make no particular difference to us to which tribe we belong, and yet there is a bare possibility that since our Lord is "the Lion of the Tribe of Judah," there may be some special gradation suggested in this tribe; so this royal priesthood may be divided into twelve different classes.

There is no revelation on this subject, and it behooves us "not to be wise above that which is written"; but since these tribes had different standings, as shown in the prophecies made respecting them, so there is seemingly quite a possibility that there will be twelve different stations or ranks among the saints.

#### THE GREAT COMPANY

Aside from the special class of overcomers, the "more than conquerors," as the Apostle calls them, those who voluntarily and willingly lay down their lives, presenting their bodies living sacrifices, and carrying out that consecration to sacrifice—aside from these, there is a large number of consecrated people of God. We do not know their number, which has not been predestinated, as is shown in Revelation—"Whose number no man knoweth." All are called to the priesthood; all consecrate to be priests, but failing to make their calling and election sure as priests, many of these fall back into this great company class, who not only made a consecration, but were begotten of the holy Spirit, and are, therefore, the Lord's, his children on the spirit plane. These are such as did not draw back in the sense in which the Apostle speaks when he says, "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." We understand the Apostle here to mean a drawing back unto perdition—the words, "draw back," signifying to do despite to all the favors of God, to lose all relationship with the Lord, to turn back to wallowing in the mire of sin and to take pleasure in the

works of flesh and devil—anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife.

This great company, however, while failing to go forward voluntarily and gladly to perform their sacrifices, as they had covenanted to do, will not be cast away, because they are still at heart faithful to the Lord; but they will be dealt with in a special manner by the great Redeemer, the Head of the church. His dealing with them will be, as Scripturally shown, to send them away "into the wilderness," into a great "time of trouble," where they will have special and severe testings, which will demonstrate their character definitely; and where they must give up their lives. Either they will renounce the things of the Lord and forsake him, or they will desire to be faithful to the Lord and to hold fast to him. If they thus hold fast they will be counted of that great company of whom the Revelator says (Rev. 7), "After this I beheld and, lo, a great company out of all nations and peoples and kindreds and tongues, stood before the throne. And the angel said unto me, Who are these? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest; and he said, These are they which have come up out of the great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple"; and palm branches were given unto them.

Here we see a wide distinction between this great company of spirit-begotten ones, ultimately overcomers, who will be "before the throne" and have palm branches, palms of victory, and who will have washed their robes and made them white during the time of trouble, and the little flock who will sit with the Lord in his throne and who, instead of bearing palm branches of victory, will have the crowns of glory; and, instead of serving in the temple, will be the temple itself. As it is written of the "more than conquerors," "I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God."—Rev. 3:12.

The differentiation, or separation, between these two classes in the "church of the first-born" is marked, as indicated by the Lord's parable of the wise and foolish virgins—a parable which, by the description, we see is applicable in the end of this age. According to this parable certain tests will come and some will be found "watching" with their lamps trimmed and burning, and will be listening to hear the Bridegroom's call, and will go forth, braving opposition and hostility and darkness of the night through which they must pass, to go with their beloved Bridegroom to his home and enter in. When the last one of these wise virgins shall have gone in, we are told that the door will be shut, by which we understand that the door of privilege to enter that class will be closed to all the rest of mankind. But we are to remember that the entire ten virgins represent the kingdom of heaven, or, in other words, the church. Hence a part of that church is shut out when the door is closed. Not merely is the world shut out, but the foolish virgins also, who, however, are not to be counted with the world, because they are "virgins." They are virgins who have been associated with the wise virgins, and for a time without any distinction being apparent, but who in the testing time are not found worthy to be of the bride class.

#### THOSE WHO WILL HAVE THEIR PORTION WITH THE HYPOCRITES

These foolish virgins, the parable shows us, will finally learn the way. They will get the oil and will trim their lamp. In other words, they will receive a larger measure of the holy Spirit, represented by the oil, and will have clearer enlightenment from the Word of God, represented by the lamp. They will trim their lamps and go forth then, that they, also, may enter into the marriage; but they will find that the wise virgins have all gone in and that the door is shut. Then they will stand without and knock, saying, "Lord, Lord, open unto us" (Matt. 25:11); we desire also to be of the bride class; we desire also to enter the heavenly glory. The Lord will answer them, however, and say, "I know you not." I do not recognize you. I recognize only one "bride." My bride class has already entered in, and I cannot recognize others as the bride. These shall then go away into the time of trouble to wash their soiled robes and make them white.

This time of trouble, we understand, is the great "time of trouble" that is coming upon the world. It will also be upon this great company class, which will not "be accounted worthy to escape those things coming upon the earth." The Lord admonishes us prophetically that there would be some such; and he warns us saying, "Pray that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all those things that shall come to pass and to stand before the Son of Man." (Luke 21:36) The little flock watches and escapes and will stand before the Son of Man approved and will be received as the bride of Christ. But this great company, although they are consecrated and spirit-begotten, and have never denied the Lord, have not, nevertheless, the proper zeal and spirit of self-sacrifice and will not be permitted to enter

in with the bride class, but will be thrust out and "have their portion with the hypocrites."

These are not hypocrites, however, but since the time of trouble is properly for hypocrites, they will have their portion with the hypocrites. The parable shows us nothing respecting these, but we are shown elsewhere (Rev. 7) that in that time of trouble they "will wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb." As a result they will be granted the palm branches and the place before the throne, to serve God in his temple.

**"THE KING'S DAUGHTER—THE VIRGINS, HER COMPANIONS, THAT FOLLOW"**

The same thought we find given us in Psalm 45, where the end of this age is pictured. There our Lord is shown as the great King in glory. The church, the little flock, is pictured as the bride, and the great company, as her virgin companions, that follow her. We are also told in that connection that the bride will have special adornment, special beauty, and will have the special place of preference. Another Scripture tells us that there is but one bride of Christ, saying, "My dove, my undefiled, is but one; she is the only one of her mother." (Cant. 6:9) Reverting to Psalm 45 again: We are told that after the bride, adorned in golden raiment and fine linen, is received by the King, the virgins, her companions, shall also be brought before the King and shall enter into the palace. This is in perfect agreement with the custom of olden times, that when a wife was taken, the father would present with the wife, a maid-servant, who would accompany her mistress and would necessarily be associated with her. Sometimes more than one maid-servant would be presented, as pictured in this Psalm. Now, if a Bridegroom were alluding to his family, while he would speak of only the one person as his wife, he would include as a part of his family or household her maid-servants. So likewise in this family of Christ. Not only is the bride to be the body of Christ, the bride of Christ, and joint-heir with him, but the virgins, her companions that follow her, will be members of his general family or household, honorable servants, but not on the plane of the bride, who will share the glory, the honor and the nature of the bridegroom.

**NEITHER PRIESTS NOR LEVITES HAD INHERITANCE IN THE LAND**

In the type of the priesthood, and the Levites, Aaron and his sons constituted the priesthood, and only these had to do with the offering on the Day of Atonement, and only these had special rights and privileges. Neither priests nor Levites, however, had inheritance in the land with the others. (Num. 18:20; Deut. 18:1, 2) Thus again was shown the fact that this great company, represented by priests, will have no inheritance in the earthly promises, in the earthly possession, in the earthly restitution. Their inheritance will be on the spirit plane, separate and distinct from all the remainder of the world, which will then come into blessing under the royal priesthood and

this company of Levites or instructors. In the case of the Levites, we remember that they were set apart to serve the Tabernacle. The great company are said to serve in the temple, and the priest class, the little flock, we have said before, are the temple. In other words, the great company class will be the servant-class on the spirit plane; so it was in the type. The Lord said to Aaron that he had given all the Levites to be servants of the priests in their ministry; so the two figures correspond.

Coming down then finally to the question, we see that in the present time it is not pertinent for us to attempt too closely to decide who will be of the bride class and who will be of the great company, as all are of the Ecclesia; but, as the Scriptures say, to "walk humbly," lest we ourselves should not be accounted worthy of the great prize. It is for us to trust that we may be amongst those "more than conquerors," who by zealously laying down their lives in a sacrificial manner shall be reckoned worthy to be of the royal priesthood—to "sit with him in his throne, even as he also overcame and is set down with the Father in his throne."

Considering the church, then, as those who will ultimately be accepted as of the priesthood, it consists of the bride class alone and no others; however, from another viewpoint, we may speak of the entire household of faith, including both the great company and the little flock, the real church of the first-born, as antitypical Levites. The Apostle speaks of the church in its present condition, saying, "Ye are a royal priesthood," referring, of course, to what is the ultimate aim, the ultimate hope set before us all, whether we make our "election sure" or not. Again the Apostle Paul speaks of the church and likens it to the members of the human body, saying, "The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee; neither the head to the foot, I have no need of thee"; for every member is necessary. (1 Cor. 12:21) We understand the Apostle here to be speaking of all of the consecrated, and not specially differentiating between the little flock and the great company. Indeed, we are not at present competent to form such a distinction or such a classification. That is decidedly the Lord's work during this time in which we are living, the harvest time, and he will separate those who are sacrificers from those who are not sacrificers.

"Up, then, and linger not, thou saint of God,  
Fling from thy shoulders each impelling load;  
Be brave and wise, shake off earth's soil and sin,  
That with the Bridegroom thou mayest enter in.  
O watch and pray!

"Gird on thy armor; face each weaponed foe;  
Deal with the sword of heaven the deadly blow;  
Forward, still forward, till the prize divine  
Rewards thy zeal, and victory is thine;  
Win thou the crown!"

## "THE BETTER SACRIFICES"

*"For if the blood of bulls and of goats and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctified to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"—Heb. 9:13, 14.*

Moses took the blood and sprinkled it both upon the Book of the Law and upon all the people, for the institution of the Law Covenant. And this was repeated year by year, the repetition being necessary to maintain the cleansing and their covenant relationship with God.

That a cleansing of a certain kind was accomplished is evident, because the nation which at the beginning of the Day of Atonement was counted unclean—the people being commanded to repent in sackcloth and ashes and to fast and to "eat no pleasant food"—were thus symbolically represented as being in great distress through sin and divine condemnation until the close of this day, when the High Priest came out and blessed the prostrated multitudes and they arose with a shout of joy. This institution of the Law Covenant at the hand of Moses and the repetition of it year by year by the priests of Israel, produced a cleansing effect in the sense that as a nation they were reckoned clean, as being justified for that year, which began with the Day of Atonement and would last 360 days, or until the following Day of Atonement.

But all the while the people of Israel realized that they were not actually cleansed from sin; that there was merely a covering of their sins for the year, and that this was the reason why, when the year was past, it was necessary for them to recognize again their defilement, individually and collectively, and to make use afresh of the provisions for sin-cleansing.

### THE GREATER SACRIFICES THAN THOSE OF BULLS AND GOATS

The Apostle here goes on to show that the basis for that reconciliation was the sacrifice represented by the blood, and that this, being efficacious with God—a certain typical merit attaching to that typical sacrifice—it would be an easy matter for them to understand that he had now, as shown in the text, provided a better sacrifice; that a larger value attached to this greater sacrifice, and that this would be sufficient—not to typically cleanse the people and bring them back into a temporary reconciliation with God, but sufficient also to establish them fully and completely in the divine favor.

This greater arrangement, then, is that Christ had offered himself through the eternal spirit to God, and this, to all who rightly accept him, cleanses from all consciousness of sin. We realize that it is not a covering for a moment, or for a day, or for a year, but a permanent covering, through faith, of all of our sins that are past. We have the basis for this in the fact that we are drawn of the Father and invited to approach him. When we do this and believe in Christ, God approaches us and thus he recognizes our step of justification; and when we come fully to him and give him our hearts, this Great One, who has offered himself as a Better Sacrifice, appears as our Advocate, to the intent that we may be accepted of the Father as members of Christ's body—as members of the bride class. He then applies the merit of his sacrifice on our behalf to make up for our

Adamic sin and imperfection, that we may be acceptable sacrifices. Thenceforth our flesh, which is reckoned justified fully and freely through faith in Christ and consecration, is considered dead—"Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."—Col. 3:3.

And not only is the flesh counted dead, but the new creature alone is thenceforth recognized of God. The new creature is not the old creature; it has a new standing and is not responsible for the sins that are past, because those were all canceled when the old creature was accepted as a "living sacrifice" in conjunction with the merit of the Advocate. Hence the new creature has a consciousness of absolute forgiveness of the sins of his mortal flesh reckoned dead—for "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit."—Rom. 8:1.

If he should turn again to walk after the flesh he would incur condemnation as a new creature. For the new mind to turn wilfully to sin would imply that it had died, and that the old mind had come to life again. Such are "twice dead—plucked up by the roots," as the Apostle says (Jude 12); they have ceased to have any relationship with God. All who are consecrated and begotten of the holy Spirit and who are abiding in the Lord Jesus through faith, seeking to walk in his footsteps, are privileged to know that their sins are forgiven and that nothing in the past can in any sense stand against them. As

the Apostle says, "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died;" yea, "It is God that justifieth." (Rom. 8:34, 33) The very one who "condemned sin in the flesh" has accepted us as new creatures, has justified us and admitted us to his family as members (prospectively) of the royal priesthood.

The typical yearly cleansing of the Jews was not a faith-cleansing; it was an actual condition of things. God treated them, as a people, from that standpoint. They had privileges and favors which they would not have had, had they been Gentiles. "What advantage hath the Jew? Much every way, but chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God" (Rom. 3:1, 2), and because of God's arrangement that if they committed a trespass the priest would offer a peace offering for them and cleanse them. All these were blessings and opportunities which they had as Jews by virtue of their covenant relationship established through Moses. But since their rejection of the Messiah that nation has had no relationship with God. They have been cut off completely from favor and "wrath has come upon this people to the uttermost."—1 Thess. 2:16.

But, God be thanked, we now see that their long period of disfavor and casting off is about ended, and they will soon be re-engrafted into the olive tree, from which, through unbelief, they were broken off (Rom. 11:17-24), and shall again share the fatness thereof, and, under the Christ glorified, will bring blessings to all the families of the earth.

## PROGRESSIVE AND COMPLETED JUSTIFICATION

The Court and the Tabernacle may properly be viewed from two different standpoints, the one representing the final accomplishment of the things typified and the other representing the tentative accomplishment of those things and the progress toward their full attainment. For instance, not every one who makes the consecration to death and passes beyond the first veil of consecration into the holy or spirit-begotten condition will be a priest, and yet only the priests were allowed in the Tabernacle. Those who come into this Tabernacle now by consecration and fail to become priests will fail to keep their standing in this place. They purpose to live up to their consecration, but come short; hence they fail to maintain their standing as priests, but fall back and become Levites.

Likewise some come into the Court and essay to be antitypical Levites who do not attain to all the privileges of Levites because they do not conform their lives fully to all that is required of Levites. Such are reckoned as coming into the Court condition for a time, but, failing to go on and make consecration, lose their standing, the prospective standing of Levites. As it is only a tentative standing, originally, they must come up to certain requirements to make it sure, to make their selection as Levites firm, positive, lasting.

### STEPS NECESSARY TO BECOME A LEVITE

Whoever takes the first step of belief and turns from sin and approaches the altar, and then goes on toward the laver, is certainly evidencing the fact that he desires to be one of the Levite class; but he is a member of this Levite class, as yet, only in this tentative or prospective sense. The Levites must go further than merely believing in Christ and turning from sin. Every Levite must figuratively receive the anointing oil on his ear, his thumb and the great toe of his right foot. He must make his consecration the same as that of the priests; he must be fully consecrated in order to serve. The person, therefore, who has merely turned away from sin and has in antitype received no recognition of the holy Spirit either upon his ear, thumb or toe, has not become, in the fullest sense, a Levite and if he does not go on and become a Levite in full he will not, by and by, have a right to any place in the Court condition—when the testing time shall prove that he has not gone on to make good, to accomplish, his consecration as a Levite.

What, then, is necessary to become a Levite? We answer: The same consecration is necessary to a Levite that is necessary to a priest, and those who will become Levites must make the consecration even unto death, and, if they fail to become priests, it is because they do not carry out that consecration unto death. But though losing their position as priests, if they still maintain their faith and a measure of obedience, they are counted as of the household of faith, typified by the Levites. In other words, the "great company" class is the Levite class, and no one can be of the "great company" class unless he has made a consecration; and he is counted an antitypical Levite only because of his failure to be of the priestly class, the sacrificing class. Those who never go on so far as to make a consecration, never get justification in full in the present life. Their hope will be the same as that of the remainder of the world, viz., a hope of actual justification during the Millennial age—restitution. In other words, this matter of faith-justification is merely

an incidental feature connected with the consecration to death—for the selection of this special class which is now being called. To impute justification to any except these would be greatly to their disadvantage.

### CHRIST'S MERIT NOT IMPUTED BEFORE CONSECRATION

To use an illustration: Suppose that Brother A had full justification accounted to him and was introduced to the Father, and suppose that Brother A then failed to maintain his justified standing; the result would be that he would fall into the second death, because he had had, in this faith-justification, all that Christ could give him; there would be nothing more to give him by and by. He could not come in with the world and get a share in the world's justification. Therefore the Lord has arranged that none shall have this complete faith-justification now except those who first turn from sin and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and who, on the strength of that turning from sin and faith in Christ, present their bodies living sacrifices to God. God's arrangement for such is that Christ shall then step in, and that which they had been enjoying in a measure, previously, as regards relationship to God, etc., is brought to its actual fulness when Christ imputes his merit to that which they have fully consecrated to death—their earthly life, their earthly nature. He imputes his merit to them at the moment of their having presented themselves; and at that moment the Father accepts the sacrifice and seals or shows his acceptance by the impartation of the holy spirit, begetting them to the new nature. So, then, none now get justification in this full sense except those who have made the consecration and been accepted, and they can never regain the earthly rights because these were given up.

To suppose that any during this age would be justified and maintain merely justification, while others would be sanctified, would be to suppose that God had called two classes, which he has not done—"Ye are all called in the one hope of your calling" and that one hope and that one calling of the church is to membership in Christ, to be of the royal priesthood.

Those who merely believe and fail to lay down their earthly life, their earthly nature, will not get the new nature, and therefore will have all the rights of that earthly nature by and by, during the Millennial age, under the terms and conditions that God has provided for all mankind. They still belong to the human family, for whom Christ died. When the time shall come for him to make application of his merit on behalf of Israel, and all the families of the earth who become Israelites, these will be included. The only ones not included in this will be those who during this Gospel age have accepted Christ by faith and have made consecration of themselves and, having died to all earthly interests, are begotten of the holy Spirit. Everyone else will have a share in the restitution provisions of God's great plan, which will go into effect as soon as the Hight Priest shall make the second sprinkling of blood antitypically on behalf of Israel and the world.

Is it not true, then, someone may ask, that no one passes from death unto life until he has made his consecration and has his justification vitalized? Yes, we answer. No one passes "from death unto life" until he makes his consecration and until Christ imputes his merit to that consecration and the Father

accepts it. Then he passes "from death unto life." As the Apostle says, "Hereby we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren" and he evidently is speaking of the church class exclusively.

**"CALLETH THOSE THINGS WHICH BE NOT AS THOUGH THEY WERE"**

And, again, someone may ask, how can we understand the following in connection with the foregoing—"God is not the God of the dead but of the living"? (Luke 20:38) Our Lord was not speaking of things as they are actually, but he was looking down prophetically to the end of the age. At the time this was said, we remember, the Lord was referring to God's statement that he was "the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." (Rom. 4:17) Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were dead; they were members of Adam's condemned race and were in the tomb and Christ had not yet died; therefore, they had not been justified to life and Jehovah's words were to be understood merely in a prophetic sense—that, in view of what he intended to do, these would have life and that he was their God, for he could not speak of himself as being the God of any who would be destroyed in the second death, those who would die like a brute beast.—2 Pet. 2:12.

From the time we begin to approach God we may have proportionately a sense of relief, because we realize that he is merciful and gracious; and the Scriptures assure us that in pro-

portion as we draw near to him, he will draw near to us. This is the attitude of all those who are approaching God, "feeling after God if haply they may find him," and who desire to know God and to do his will and to be in harmony with him. They have a measure of peace, a measure of joy, a measure of blessing. They are going in the right direction; but it is one thing to go in the right direction and another to reach the right spot; they do not reach the right spot until they have gone all the way to full faith and full obedience and the acceptance of the Lord's provision, that if they would be his disciples, followers of him, they must "take up their cross" and walk in his steps, and, as the Apostle says, present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God, their reasonable service. Of this class it could be truly said, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 8:1) They are in Christ Jesus in the sense of coming into his relationship of begetting of the Spirit and of being members of his body. These are walking, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. The others who turn from sin to God, but who never make consecration, are still under the Adamic condemnation because they have never "escaped the condemnation that is on the world," for there is only one way now in which we can escape and that is through the arrangement of this Gospel age that we shall not only believe but consecrate. Thus we have the impartation of Christ's merit.

**IS DEATH EXTINCTION?**

The spark of animal energy which God supplied to Adam and which he in turn dispensed to his offspring and which was forfeited for him and his posterity by his act of disobedience, passes at death from the individual, as absolutely as it does from a brute beast. But the word "life" as used in a large number of instances does not stand merely for the spark of animal energy, but is a synonym for soul or being.

In God's purpose and arrangement this being has not in death become extinct, because he has provided for it a future. There is, however, no sentient being in the sense of consciousness, or knowledge, or appreciation of pain or joy, or of any other experience, but the Divine Creator who first gave being has declared that in the case of Adam and his children it is his purpose to provide a Redeemer through whom all may be restored as completely as before they came under the death sentence. The world, which does not recognize God or his power, and which has no knowledge of the promise of resurrection through the merit of Christ's redemptive work, might properly enough speak of one in death as being as extinct as a dead animal; and this is the standpoint of the agnostic; but by believers instructed of God respecting his purpose in Christ, and the resurrection of the dead, eventually, and the opportunity of eternal life to every one, this matter is to be viewed from the same standpoint that our Lord viewed it when he said, "To God all are alive"—that is, God purposes their awakening, and speaks of the present condition of Adamic death as merely a suspension of life, and not as extinction.

**WAS CHRIST EXTINGUISHED DURING THE PERIOD OF HIS DEATH?**

It may be asked, Was not our Lord extinct from the time of his death until his resurrection? The Scriptures tell us that the man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom for all—a corresponding price. Again they tell us that "Christ died for our sins," and that he "arose again on the third day." But we do not understand that the One who arose was the same in all particulars as the One who died. He was "put to death in flesh"; he was "quickened (made alive) in spirit." In his case, therefore, the matter may be viewed from these two standpoints, viz., he died in the flesh, as a man, and as a man has never come to life again, and he never intends to use again, for himself, those manhood qualities. He has been raised from the dead a Spirit—"Now the Lord is that Spirit"—and this glorious Spirit whom "God has highly exalted and given a name above every name," is the one who will ultimately bless the world; he has the authority to do this great work in due time.

This power and authority rest in the fact of his sacrifice. The manhood that he laid down, in death, relinquished, he is to give ultimately to Adam and all his race in harmony with the Apostle's statement that "as by man came death, by man will come also the resurrection of the dead," and "as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive," all who will come into relationship and harmony with God, through Christ, during this age or the Millennial age.

We see that the church, the body of Christ, has now the imputed merit of his sacrifice to cover all its imperfections and blemishes, enabling them to offer a sacrifice acceptable to God, holy in his sight, that we, by suffering with our Lord, might be accounted worthy to reign with him.

We see that God's arrangement was that our Lord Jesus should first sacrifice his human nature at Jordan. He was reckoned dead from that time forward, throughout the three and a half years of his ministry, as well as during the three days he was in the tomb. He was dead so far as his earthly life was concerned, for he had fully surrendered this. At the time he made his consecration God gave him the holy Spirit and the Scriptures explain that this impartation of the holy Spirit signified a begetting of the spirit to a new life; in other words, that a new life there began. That new life developed during the three and a half years; and so with us. From the time we make our consecration and receive the begetting of the holy Spirit, this new life develops and progresses, only that with our Lord the progress was much more rapid in the graces, in all knowledge and harmony with the Father and in the development of himself as a new creature and in enduring all the necessary tests and trials, because we are handicapped by the imperfections of the flesh, while he was perfect.

But as it is true with us that the new creature thrives in proportion as the old creature dies, so it was with our Lord Jesus. He was coming nearer to perfection as a new creature with every trial and every victory. He was approaching that standard which the Father would approve in the great High Priest and Head of the new creation, until, at the time of his death, his words were, "It is finished"—his sacrificing of the flesh was finished, and that life which he had consecrated to sacrifice three and one-half years before and which was reckoned as passed away at that time, actually ceased on the cross. The new creature was not brought forth in the birth of the resurrection, until the third day, but it was there in the divine sight; it was "not possible that he should be holden of death." The whole matter was in harmony with the divine plan. As he was born from the dead on the third day he must have been begotten previous to that birth, and his begetting was, as we have seen, at Jordan, when the Spirit of God was seen descending in the form of a dove.

So, then, coming to the direct question, there are two standpoints of viewing the whole matter and to ignore either would not be wise. That physically our Lord died, lost the spark of life and all conscious existence as absolutely as any others lose it, or as any brute beast ever lost it, there can be no doubt. But the important point is as respects his soul or being. He never forfeited his right to life and it was when he made a consecration of it to death that the Father gave him the new life, and this resurrection life he lived during the three and one-half years of his ministry. The new creature was counted alive from the divine standpoint, as in the type he is pictured as the great High Priest in the Holy, offering incense. Just so it is with us, his followers. We are counted as risen with him from the time we make our consecration and are begotten of the holy Spirit. We are not only dead with him, but we shall reign with him, and we are risen with him through faith in the operation of God's power. If we were to lose faith in this operation of God's power we would then be taking our place with the world, for they ignore this power. It is for us to maintain the standpoint of faith, and, while recognizing the facts as respects the real spark of life and its extinction, to recognize also the Lord's Word and to count, as does God, the things that are not yet completed as though they were accomplished.



# THE CAMEL AND THE NEEDLE'S EYE

MATT. 19:13-26.—AUG. 7.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"Jesus said, Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

En route toward Jerusalem the Master was met by mothers desiring to have his blessing upon their children. The Apostles, realizing the greatness of their Master and the importance of his time, forbade this and rebuked the mothers. When Jesus heard, he called them and said: "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven," and he put his hands in blessing upon their heads.

From this we are not to understand that the kingdom of Heaven will be composed of little children. This erroneous idea has gone broadcast, and such an impression respecting the kingdom has thus resulted. On the contrary, no little children can get into the kingdom. Only those who have the hearing of faith are even "called" to the kingdom and its glories. Our Lord's blessing upon little children merely signified his sympathy and love and his appreciation of the purity and innocence of childhood. Those who will be of the kingdom of God must be like little children in the sense of being simple hearted, true, honest and trustful of their heavenly Father—of such-like will be the inheritors of the kingdom.

Another account tells us of Jesus' further words to the effect that all who would be his disciples must become as little children—must be like little children in guilelessness, faith, etc. But those who will be heirs of the kingdom will all be "overcomers." Such take up their cross and follow the Lord whithersoever he leadeth. As our Lord could not have taken up his cross when he was a boy of nine, so likewise children cannot become the followers of Christ in the Scriptural sense until they have reached the age of discretion, which with some may occur much earlier than with others. We have known children of twelve years or thereabouts to give excellent evidence of faith, obedience and consecration to the Lord's will and evidence of being begotten of the holy Spirit. These, of course, but no other children, could have hope of sharing with Christ in his Millennial kingdom.

## THE YOUNG NOBLEMAN'S TEST

On his journey our Lord was accosted by one who said, "Good Master, what good things shall I do that I may have eternal life?" He had the right idea, namely, that eternal life is the grand desideratum, the grand hope of all hopes before the human family. We are glad of the question, for it brought forth the inspired answer, in which everybody is interested. What is the value of the present life, except as it leads us up the passageway to eternal life? How utterly lost we should feel if assured that at death we would be blotted out forever! How little in this life would be worth consideration—how little it could do toward filling the longing of our hearts, which yearn for eternal life!

Our Lord parried the question, in order to draw out the young man and make him commit himself. "Why do you call me good?" Why do you acknowledge me as a good teacher? I am either the Messiah, as I claim, or else an impostor and far from good. Do you accept my Messiahship? If you do not, how can you call me good or acknowledge that anything could be good that does not proceed from God, the Fountain of all goodness? But answering your question; if you would enter into eternal life, keep the commandments. The young man replied, Which? The Master answered, "Thou shalt do no murder, nor commit adultery, nor steal, nor bear false witness, but honor thy father and thy mother and love thy neighbor as thyself." The young man replied, "All these things have I observed from my youth. What lack I yet?"

He was a model young man and Jesus loved him. Evidently he was keeping the Jewish law to the extent of his knowledge and ability. He thought that he was loving his neighbor as himself; but this was a mistake which the Lord disclosed to him by the following suggestion: "If thou wouldst be perfect, go sell all that thou hast and give to the poor and thou shalt have treasure in heaven" instead of on earth; sacrifice also your earthly reputation and become my follower.

Ah, how the Lord knew to put his finger on the sore spot! The young man had come to him very boastful, very sure that if any one in the world was seeking to be in harmony with the divine arrangement he was that one. He came for the Master's approval, that he might hear him say, "You are the one excep-

tion to the rule." The Lord did not say, "If you love your neighbor as you love yourself you will at least put forth an effort to make that neighbor as comfortable as you desire to be comfortable." He was content to be very rich, while some of his neighbors whom he thought he loved as he loved himself were very poor—abjectly, sorrowfully so. When Jesus discovered to him the difficulty of his situation, he grasped it at once. He saw himself as never before. It became a new test with him. Thus it is with all. A previous lesson showed us the kingdom as a great prize, a pearl of great value, a treasure, which to possess, will cost all that we have; and this lesson points out the same fact.

Let us not make the mistake made by some, and suppose that the young man who lived so honorable a life and failed to gain heaven, would be thrust down into eternal torment because he did not sacrifice his all to become the Lord's disciple. His loss of the kingdom was a sufficient penalty without suffering eternal torment in the future. Such members of the human family, under the blessed conditions of the Millennial kingdom, will doubtless make very rapid progress and will obtain eternal life on the plane of human perfection, though not worthy of the kingdom honors which belong only to the elect. And the elect are those only who are gladly sacrificing their lives and their all to gain the great prize.

## PASSING THROUGH THE NEEDLE'S EYE

Our Lord commented upon the matter to his disciples and added that the rich must have great difficulty in connection with their endeavor to enter the kingdom. He said, sympathetically, rather than in a denunciatory manner, "It is easier for a camel to go through the needle's eye than for the rich to enter the kingdom of God." This astonished the disciples very greatly, for they knew that the majority of the religionists of their day belonged to the wealthy class, the scribes and the Pharisees. They replied, "Who then, can get into the kingdom, if these cannot?" Our Lord's reply was, "With men this is impossible, but not with God." Men would be inclined to say that God would find no one for the kingdom at all if he rejected the rich.

In a word, no rich man can get into the kingdom. He must give up everything to the Lord or else be barred from a place in the kingdom. The terms of acceptance are the same to the rich as to the poor. He who would have the "pearl of great price" must sell all that he has in order that he may obtain it. The rich must give up all to the Lord, and then as stewards of their riches will be held responsible for their stewardship.

The following little poem describes the needle's eye, or small gate beside the larger gate, through which the camels might pass into the walled city after sundown and without any of their burden. So the rich by unloading and becoming poor may get into the kingdom:—

## THROUGH THE NEEDLE'S EYE

"Tall was my camel and laden high,  
And small the gate as a needle's eye.  
"The city within was very fair,  
And I and my camel would enter there.  
"You must lower your load,' the porter cried  
'You must throw away that bundle of pride.'  
"This I did, but the load was great,  
Far too wide for the narrow gate.  
"Now,' said the porter, 'to make it less.  
Discard that hamper of selfishness.'  
"I obeyed, though with much ado,  
Yet still nor camel nor I got through.  
"Ah,' said the porter, 'your load must hold  
Some little package of trust-in-gold.'  
"The merest handful was all I had,  
Yet, 'Throw it away,' the porter bade.  
"Then lo, a marvel! the camel tall  
Shrank to the size of the portal small,  
"And all my riches, a vast estate,  
Easily passed through the narrow gate!"

## BROTHER EDGAR'S BOOK

Brother John Edgar, M. D., whose decease was mentioned in the July 1 issue and again referred to in the July 15 *TOWER*, a year ago, in company with his Brother Morton, visited the Great Pyramid and took measurements, photographs, etc. The result was the preparation of a book, of which we have seen a

portion. It is gotten up in good style, good paper. Doubtless some of our readers will be interested in having it. We have placed orders for a quantity as soon as possible. The price will be \$1.35, postage prepaid, and it can be ordered through either our Brooklyn or our London office.

## THE BLOTTING OUT OF SINS

*"Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."*—Acts 3:19.

All who have turned from sin and accepted Christ and made a full consecration of themselves to the divine will, and have been accepted of God by the begetting of the Spirit, have their sins reckoned as covered or put away from divine sight. So far as the new creature is concerned, they commit no sin; but so far as their flesh is concerned, through which alone they can at present have conscious being, they are imperfect. These imperfections of the flesh, unwillingly theirs, are figuratively said to be covered with the Wedding Robe of Christ's Righteousness, imputed to them. The church, however, hopes not to continue always in this merely imputed condition of righteousness, but to obtain eventually an actual righteousness. The Lord's Word guarantees that this shall be the church's portion by virtue of a share in the "first resurrection," "his resurrection."

When that which is sown in weakness shall have been raised in power; when that which is sown in dishonor shall have been raised in glory; when that which is sown an animal body shall have been raised a spiritual body, then, so far as the church is concerned, the blotting out of sin in the most absolute and complete sense will have been effected—but not until then. At present the church's sins are covered, by divine arrangement, through the great Advocate, Jesus. So, then, we see that this blotting out of the church's sins will give her precedence over all the world of mankind; and following the blotting out of her sins in the "first resurrection," will begin the restitution work for all Israel and through them for all mankind.

### THE NEW COVENANT ISRAELITISH

It might be asked, Would the two texts (Romans 11:27; Acts 3:19, 20) prove that the New Covenant will not be made until the completion of the sacrifice of all the members of the body of Christ, until after the merit of Christ's sacrifice shall have been applied, at the end of the Gospel age, on behalf of the world?

It is most conclusively proved in these texts, as well as in many others, that the New Covenant cannot go into effect with the people of Israel until the end of this Gospel age. We are to remember, however, that the Lord has made a distinct provision by which all the "called" ones of this Gospel age may come into covenant relationship with him through Christ, through faith in the precious blood and consecration unto death, through justification by the merit of the great Advocate. These, however, could not maintain their covenant relationship with God were it not for their privilege of going to the Throne of heavenly grace and there receiving mercy through the intercession of their Advocate for those trespasses which are unwillingly theirs as new creatures.

This expression, New Covenant, is not used in connection with any others of mankind than the Jews, because it is not true that God will make a New Covenant with the remainder of mankind. As the Apostle suggests, the word "New" here implies a previous covenant which was counted Old, and this Old Covenant was not made with other nations or peoples than the Jews, of whom God declared that he "took them by the hand

to lead them out of Egypt, which my covenant they brake." (Jer. 31:32) Hence, we should understand that all references to the New Covenant are references to God's arrangement with the Jewish people to supplant the old arrangement under Moses, under the conditions of which they are still condemned and bound. By this new, substitutionary covenant, God will shortly release the Jew from the condemnation of the Old Covenant.

It will be in an incidental way that other nations will be granted the privilege of coming under the same laws and arrangements with natural Israel in the blotting out of sin and in being restored to the divine image and thus to full harmony and fellowship and covenant relationship with God, which relationship all may maintain, if they will, throughout eternity. But we see that some of these who will thus be brought into covenant relationship and turned over to God at the end of the Millennial age will fail to maintain that relationship; and that under the testing incidental to the release of Satan at the end of the thousand years, some will manifest disloyalty and lose this standing and again fall into the condemnation of death—the "second death."

### THE BLOTTING OUT OF SINS

We are not necessarily to understand the blotting out of sin to signify the blotting out of the recognition of sin. We may rather assume that through all eternity this great insurrection or rebellion—the reign of sin and death for 6,000 years upon this earth—will be a standing lesson to all of God's creatures throughout his universe. True, it is said of Israel, "Your sins and iniquities will I remember no more," but this should be understood as signifying that their sins will be remembered no more against them in a condemnatory sense. In that sense of the word, and in every evil and unsatisfactory sense, these sins will be remembered no more; but as lessons of the exceeding sinfulness of sin and of the justice of God in punishing it, and of the love of God in providing redemption from it—in this sense sin will doubtless always be remembered.

The sense, then, in which this text applies to the blotting out of sins would be this: Sin and imperfection are written in all our mortal bodies. Not only does sin put its heavy hand upon us through death—the destruction of our physical frame in general—but it specially leaves its mark upon the mind, and upon the face—the index of the character. The blotting out of sin, therefore, or the lifting of individuals out of sin, out of imperfection, out of their blemished condition, will signify their uplifting to all those glorious qualities of heart and mind and body which were father Adam's portion in the beginning, when he was in the image and likeness of God.

In the case of the church and her change in the "first resurrection" the blotting out will not be a slow and gradual process, but an instantaneous blotting out. Her change will be "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." The Apostle tells us that the change effected thus in the church will be glorious; that we shall be made like him who is the "express image of the Father's person." We shall see him as he is and share his glory.

## "THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS"

### NOT MANY WISE, MIGHTY, NOBLE CALLED

It is supposable that some of the Lord's people may not be what is termed talented, in the sense of possessing large talents or many talents, but it is not supposable that any one in the body of Christ would be without some talent, some opportunity for service. This parable of the Talents implies it. (Matthew 25:14-30) Every one of these servants was called; every one of them received either one or more talents—and the parable did not apply merely to the beginning of the age, to the Apostles, etc., but evidently was intended to be applicable down to the end of the age, until the Lord should return from the "far country." As those who lived at that time did not remain until the Lord's coming, therefore the parable must include all who would become his disciples down to his second advent. Otherwise we could not be viewed as "co-workers together with God."

We cannot be servants if we have nothing wherewith to serve! we could not bring forth fruitage, either in ourselves or others, without some ability and opportunity. It therefore becomes an important matter to each to recognize the fact that he must have had given him at least one talent, and that he will be held responsible for the use of what he has.

In the case of some of the Lord's people it would seem wise to call attention to the propriety of making sure what talent they have, and to make sure that they are not trying to use one that they have not. It seems to be a general weakness or failing amongst mankind to try to do something they cannot do, and to scorn that which they are able to do. The Apostle

Paul (1 Cor. 1:26) said, "Not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble are called"—not that God objects to those having many talents serving his cause, but not many of these accept his call. Those who have many talents find many ways of using them and many people in the world to desire them; and, ambitious for place and preferment, they have an abundance of opportunity to shine before men; but in the Lord's service they would not, perhaps, find so good an opportunity for the display of their talents and, therefore, they would not gain the renown that might be theirs in the earthly pursuits. They would be accounted foolish by the world should they be very energetic in serving the Lord and seeking to glorify his name. "Why do you not become rich? Why do you not live in style and hold up your head among men and get a great name, etc.?" are suggestions which attract those who have many talents; therefore few of that class are disposed to accept the Lord's call; while those who realize that they never could make a name for themselves in the world, appreciate more, perhaps, the great "high calling."

However, many of these of small talents increase them by use and become quite proficient in the truth in various lines in proportion as they are faithful in the use of the talents they possess. The Truth seems to have a brightening and clarifying effect upon all minds, great and small.

One of the important lessons, then, for the Lord's people

to learn is to notice what talents the Lord has given them, whether time, or education, or special opportunities for service; and to keep them in use, that their brilliancy may increase and not become dimmed by neglect.

We can readily see that there would be, as already expressed, more difficulty with one of five talents, in making a consecration, than in the case of a one-talent man, although the man of one talent might have much cause for discouragement in feeling that his gift is insignificant and poor in proportion to what many others have. The man of five talents would have the opposite experience and be in danger of being puffed up, "heady and high minded." We might well reason that the Lord in these varying conditions would make his grace sufficient; indeed, he has promised so to do for all those who put their trust in him.

#### "GIVE ME NEITHER POVERTY NOR RICHES"

The man with the one talent has in some respects a better opportunity for making his "calling and election sure." However, Solomon undoubtedly was wise in requesting of the Lord, "Give me neither poverty nor riches." (Prov. 30:8) In other words, probably the two-talent man would have a natural ad-

vantage, in that he would be neither so likely to be discouraged nor to be puffed up.

These conditions are not of the Lord's making. If the Lord made a man with one talent, and make another with two talents, and another with five talents, he would in some way doubtless have equalized the matter so that the talents of one would offset those of another. But he has not given our talents in such a way. These are merely what we have by nature and what we bring to the Lord in consecration and devote to him, though they are, in another sense, all his gifts. The Lord, therefore, is not responsible for a man's having but one talent, nor for his having five, but at his consecration the Lord makes him steward over his possessions to do the best he can with them.

The force of the argument would be, then, that the man with the five talents would have more difficulty in keeping them fully employed, fully devoted and fully separated from worldly ambitions, etc., than would the man who had fewer. So if any of us were given a choice, it would, perhaps, be wise to choose the medium, because of the increase of responsibilities to those possessing more.

### KEEPING OURSELVES IN THE LOVE OF GOD

This thought of the responsibility of each child of God to keep himself, is set forth in various terms throughout the Scriptures. Our Lord said, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." Our part is to do the watching and praying; to do our very best, and then it is God's part to overrule and direct and supervise our affairs so that all things shall work together for good to us, because we have come into this proper relationship with the Father.

We recognize that this Scripture and other Scriptures are not given to the world, but are addressed only to God's people, to "the sanctified in Christ Jesus." It is these sanctified ones who are to keep themselves. The unsanctified, unholy, have not made any start toward the Lord, and are not, therefore, in a place which they should wish to keep; they are rather in an undesirable place which they should seek to abandon. But those who have accepted God's terms, and have been begotten of the holy Spirit, and have experienced an entrance into this "grace wherein we stand, rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God," are admonished that they must keep this place, must preserve themselves in this position, must "keep themselves in the love of God." If they do not thus keep themselves, do not keep their hearts with all diligence, they are not of the kind that God designs to keep; they are the kind that he designs shall fall, and for whom he has provided special snares and difficulties that they may fall—not into eternal torment, as some of us formerly thought—but fall away from the promises of God and the particular favors provided for the elect.

The Lord has not predetermined what place we shall occupy in the future, but he is allowing our course to be influenced by conditions of the present life, so that all those who choose to be

in harmony with God may follow in the footsteps of Jesus. There are outward manifestations by which the Lord's people may know their own standing, and to some extent may be able to know of their progress. In proportion as one realizes the Spirit of Christ developed in himself, in proportion as he sees the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit, he may know of his own progress in the love of God, and may know also that unless he keep himself in the love of God, he will not stand, will not maintain his place, but will fall; as the Apostle Peter says: "If ye do these things ye shall never fall." If we conform to the divine arrangement, if we keep ourselves in the love of God, we shall, therefore, be preserved.

All those who are thus in divine favor have the divine promise and all the divine power behind the promise, necessary to keep them. So, then, our text is in full accord with other texts bearing upon this subject. Those who are begotten of the holy Spirit have the responsibility of keeping themselves in that holy condition of heart. They may not be responsible for some of the outward circumstances that beset them, nor for the condition of others, nor for the temptations that come to them. They may not in the fullest degree be responsible for all of their own course, because of the imperfections of the "earthen vessel"; but under the Lord's providential arrangement, if they keep their hearts, "that wicked one toucheth them not," will not injure them, will not harm them. His besetments may serve to test, may be permitted of God to work out for them, if properly exercised thereby, "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"; but the adversary can do them no harm, because they belong to God, and he is pledged to defend in the highest sense the best interests of all those who have given their hearts to him in full consecration.

### "LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED"

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—Of course you know that you have enemies and warm enemies as well as warm friends; and that the former manifest an evil, slanderous and back-biting spirit is only what we might expect, for thus we were forewarned of the Lord. I write you respecting one of these malicious endeavors to injure you and discredit the Lord's work which you are doing. The slander is that you inveigled a large sum of money, in some fraudulent manner, from a brother named Hope Hay. Indistinctly I remember some years ago the statement published in THE WATCH TOWER that Brother Hay had donated to THE WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY \$10,000, and I infer that this is the transaction they have in mind.

I am sure, dear Brother Russell, that this is merely another endeavor of the adversary to poison the minds of some against you and against the truth, of which you are the prominent representative. I am not, therefore, asking on my own account, but merely seeking advice as to what reply I should make to those who thus slander you. I know very well that you never so much as solicit money of anybody; and hence, that nothing could be further from your course than to obtain money under false pretense of any kind. In strong bonds of Christian love,

Your brother in the dear Redeemer,

C. A. OWEN.

#### BROTHER RUSSELL'S REPLY TO THE SLANDER

DEAR BROTHER:—I am glad to have your letter. How sorry we feel for those enemies of righteousness who in bitterness of

spirit lend themselves as tools to the adversary in an endeavor to oppose the harvest work! I presume that the Lord permits such things as tests of faith and loyalty to him, and tests to his people as to what spirit they are of. Anyway, dear Brother, you will be glad to know that the more my enemies assail and falsely charge me with evil, the more the Lord blesses me and his work under my care. I am reminded here of the words of St. Paul respecting the thorn in the flesh which the Lord permitted him to have, but which he assured him would do him no injury, saying, "My grace is sufficient for thee." I answer, therefore, with St. Paul, "Most gladly will I rather glory in my afflictions that the power of Christ may rest upon me."—2 Cor. 12:9.

Your recollection that the matter of Brother Hay's donation to the Tract Fund was published in THE WATCH TOWER years ago is quite correct. Dear Brother Hay called upon me personally, saying that he had received a legacy of \$20,000 and that, as he had a pension from the Canadian Government, he thought he could not do better than donate the entire legacy to the Lord's cause—as a donation to the funds of THE WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY.

I replied that I appreciated very highly his generous spirit and that as the President of the Society I would not feel at liberty to refuse any gifts voluntarily tendered to it. However, as he had not yet made the donation and had asked my opinion respecting it, I gave that opinion. I said that if I were in his stead I would prefer to give only one-half of the sum at the



time, and to retain possession of the remainder, with a view to using it so as to permit greater personal activities in the harvest field. Brother Hay thanked me for the advice and said he thought it to be good and that he would follow it.

The Society's books show that from time to time subsequently he sent to us in all \$9,500. They also show that this donation was specially used in harmony with Brother Hay's knowledge and wishes for the relief of some of the hundreds of colporteurs who had gotten into debt in their endeavor to serve the truth. Credits were given to these harvest workers in Brother Hay's name and many of them, we know, acknowledged the matter directly to him. The entire matter was published in THE WATCH TOWER columns that all of the dear friends might know of Brother Hay's generous course. Since then we have abandoned everything akin to publicity in respect to those who make donations to the Society's funds, deeming this to be the wiser course—the Lord's will.

Brother Hay has been an invalid for several years. And we understand that he lost in various ways nearly all of the remainder of his legacy. Since we have none of Brother Hay's money in our possession, having expended every dollar of it in harmony with his wishes, we have not felt it to be our duty to

take money contributed by others for the promotion of Christian knowledge to reimburse Brother Hay's losses. The Society has felt content in assuming the full responsibility of Brother Hay at a Canadian Sanitarium—selected by himself and his wife—paying all the charges of the same. This we did, not on the score of his donation to the Tract Fund, but on account of his having served in the pilgrim work. We have assumed that his government pension, the amount of which we do not know, has been sufficient for the maintenance of his family, and that possibly the amount of the pension has been increased on account of his more serious illness.

We are glad to make these explanations, dear Brother, but you can readily see how useless it would be for us to attempt to chase after all the mean and contemptible slanders and misrepresentations which the adversary could find people mean enough to scatter. To chase slanders would waste our time and hinder the Lord's work—the very thing the adversary would like to accomplish. We have given ourselves fully and unreservedly to the Lord. This includes not only all of our powers and talents, but also amongst these our reputation.

Yours in the love and service of the Redeemer,

C. T. RUSSELL.

## SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

MY DEAR BROTHER AND PASTOR:—

Father Time has tolled off another year for you—a year of living, loving, sacrificial service for our Father and the brethren. How we wish we could show forth our appreciation for that service! Our Father has certainly blessed us through you. And at this time—when many who once walked with us, no longer walk with us, but vilify and persecute and misrepresent your teachings—we are especially grateful to our Heavenly Father because we still have a hearing ear and can still see more wondrous beauty in the divine plan, as shown us through his own appointed channel.

In closing I desire to mention the vow. When first you suggested it I resented it. One clause (which one I will not say) stood out before me in all prominence. At that time it was all that I saw in it; and, frankly, I opposed it and told myself and others also that I did not need it. Some months later, while in another city, I was walking along the street with a brother from a distant city and our conversation turned toward the vow. Well, that night I made the vow my own, and since then I find that above all things I needed most that particular clause that I objected to so strenuously. I thank God for the vow. I desire an interest in your prayers to the end that I may be better able to keep it.

And now, dear Brother, as you have entered into another year of service, may the Lord bless your efforts; may he give you grace abundant for every time of need; may he give you much joy; may he strengthen you and keep you faithful unto the end, and finally may you be amongst those whom he is pleased to call "more than conquerors" in and through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Your brother only by his grace,

H. W. McALLISTER.

### IN REPLY

DEAR BROTHER:—

I find your letter of the 13th ultimo awaiting me on my return from the convention trip, and take this opportunity to reply.

Your kind words of love and fellowship in our dear Redeemer are very especially appreciated and reciprocated. The confidence and co-operation of all the fellow-members in the body is a very valued aid to me.

I rejoice with you that the Lord graciously delivered you from any entanglement of thought in opposing the vow, and that having made it to the Lord and acknowledged it in the presence of all his people you have found especial blessing therein. With the Psalmist we can say, "For thou, O God, hast heard my Vow: thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name."

Very sincerely your brother and fellow-servant.

GENTLEMEN:—

I found a copy of your PEOPLES PULPIT on my porch and am much interested in it. Enclosed find twelve cents, for which please send me the publication for one year. Also will you kindly send me sample copies containing the sermons, "Thieves in Paradise," "The Rich Man in Hell," and "Lazarus in Abraham's Bosom." These you say are free.

Yours truly,

FRED S. LACKY—N. J.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

I am requested to inform you of the number who memorialized at this place the death of our dear Lord.

I wish to tell you what a blessed time we had. I believe it was because we had all been praying for the presence of the Master. In the afternoon we had a prayer, praise and testimony meeting. The evening meeting commenced with a song service. As we looked at the faces of the dear friends we could see joy mingled with sorrow. We tried in our weak way to show the oneness of our Lord and his church. Then Brother Durant addressed us on the Bread and Brother Jackson on the Cup. I think I can speak for all the friends when I say that we deem it an unspeakable privilege to be counted worthy to drink of his cup, and by and by to share his glory.

We all pray for you, dear Brother, that the richer blessing of God may continue with you unto the end.

Yours in the One blessed Hope,

GEORGE LEE.—Fla.

DEAR SIR:—

I found one of the copies of PEOPLES PULPIT on a car one night on my way home and was so much impressed that I thought it was wise to subscribe for it. Enclosed find twelve cents for one year, and send me the following sermons, "Gathering the Lord's Jewels," "The Most Precious Text," "Liberty, Liberty, Liberty," "Sin's Small Beginnings," "Sin Atonement," "The Value of Toil," "Foreordination, Predestination and Election," "The Rich Man in Hell," "Where Are the Dead?" "Thieves in Paradise."

A Brother in Christ,

ROBT. COOPER.—Ill.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

I have been thinking for some time that I would write to you and tell you how much I appreciate "Present Truth." I have been in the truth two years, through the volunteer work of some of the brethren; chiefly Brother Seth Moore of this town.

I had been a Baptist for twenty years and had been ordained to the ministry of that Church. I withdrew from that denomination eight years ago, and began a prayerful search for the church of Christ. God answered my prayer, and now I love my God, my Savior and my Bible better than I ever did before, and I have felt more real satisfaction and joy in two years than in all my past life put together.

It was some time before I could get my own consent to send my name as one having taken the "vow," but that "vow" contains the sentiments of my heart, and may God help me to keep it!

I am praying for the good work at Brooklyn and all over the world. Find enclosed 50 cents for which please send me ten copies of "The Plan of the Ages," WATCH TOWER form. I want to do a little volunteer work myself. With much love, I am,

Your Brother in Christ,

J. W. WILSON.—Texas.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

Realizing that I owe you many thanks, and out of a motive of love to you, I will give you a little of my testimony. I have