

their lives according to covenant, but who have, nevertheless, not repudiated the Lord, will be brought, in the time of trouble approaching, into such straits that they will be forced either to deny the Lord or to lay down their lives for the truth. But since this laying down of life will be in a sense compulsory, it is not reckoned as being a "sacrifice" but a "destruction of the flesh." Here your inquiry comes in, Why does the high priest confess over this class certain sins which have already been atoned for by the blood of the bullock and the blood of the goat? We reply that sin may be considered from two standpoints: First, as the divine condemnation, which cannot be liquidated by the sufferings of the transgressor, but which must be met by the atonement sacrifice of the great High Priest, head and body. Second, there is a retributive operation of divine law amongst men which brings upon the sinner a measure of suffering for sins. This latter, we believe, is represented in the sufferings of the scapegoat in the wilderness. As the Lord charged up against the living generation of Jews at the first advent, who had the light and knowledge peculiar to their own day, and who sinned against this light and knowledge, and required at the hands of that generation all the blood shed from Abel down, so we understand that, similarly, there is a great responsibility in God's sight resting upon those who today constitute nominal Christendom, who are nominally children of the Lord and tethered at the door of the tabernacle. At the hands of nominal Christianity today will be required much, for if nominal Christendom entire

were consecrated to the Lord there would be no necessity for the time of trouble to come at all, but the Lord might come and set up his kingdom amongst a willing people without the necessity of overturning present institutions in a day of wrath. Consequently, when the day of wrath comes, it will be but the just recompense, and the divine wrath should be fully manifested upon and toward this nominal class.

RESPECTING DEUTERONOMY 29:29

Question.—Please make some comment on Deut. 29:29.

Answer.—We understand this to mean that the Lord's people are to be careful to study and obey all that the Lord our God has commanded, searching diligently to appreciate it as it may become due to be understood. There are questions, nevertheless, respecting which the Lord has made no particular revelation, and we are to avoid the waste of time in considering those things, and to realize that had they been important for us to know the Lord would have revealed them in his Word. This is in harmony with the Apostle's statement, "All Scripture that is given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work." These assurances of sufficiency of the meat in due season to the household of faith should not only relieve us from anxious thought on outside lines, but should make us suspicious of anything and everything that is being taught that is additional to the Scriptures, as well as contrary to them.

"TO OBEY IS BETTER THAN SACRIFICE"

Obedience to the Lord our God
Is what he doth require;
He looketh not for sacrifice
Without his Spirit's power.

The light of truth that shines from God
And shows to us his way,
Reveals the path wherein to walk
While in this house of clay.

If faithful to our trust on earth
And hold "the faith" once given,
Then will our Master say, "Well done!
Come thou, and enter heaven."

If God's great plan in vision speaks,
As prophets said it would,
Oh, may we heed its welcome voice
And be among "the good."

Pray, do not compromise the truth;
Oh, sell it not, my friend:
Obedience doth our God require
Until our course shall end.

—James Hay.

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

COLLEGE EDUCATION IS ANTI-CHRISTIAN

What we have already pointed out,—that the whole trend of college training is along the lines of skepticism as respects the revealed religion of Bible, along the lines of "higher criticism"—is well sustained by the following statement of the matter by Doctor J. A. Leavitt, President of Ewing College, Ill. Among other things he says in the *March Homiletic Review*:—

"Every observant person has known of numerous instances of believers who have had their faith unsettled by their scientific studies. . . . Can studies so pursued as to atrophy one's spiritual nature be said to tend toward Christ? Can an education be truly Christian that does not increase one's powers to apprehend God and to make him known?

"It will hardly be supposed by any one that the study of the ancient classics tends toward Christ. Few thoughtful parents will entertain for a moment the idea of having their children study for years modern authors, however beautifully written, which are based upon the amours of characters like Paris and Helen, and such corrupt beings as pagan gods and goddesses. It is known that the rites and practices in the worship of some of them were prohibited by the heathen themselves. White, in his 'Mythology,' says: 'There can be no doubt that the stories concerning them had an unfavorable influence on the pagan world, and they contributed to weaken whatever respect remained for public or private virtue.' Is it reasonable to suppose that the imagination of our youth can dwell for years upon the vices of the pagans and their gods and remain untainted?

"Students should be grounded in the fundamentals of morals. Christian evidences should have a larger place. Psychology should be Biblical and emphasized on the spiritual side. . . .

"The ancient classics should be greatly curtailed. In its place we should have much of the oldest and purest history, the most exalted poetry, and the profoundest thought found in

the Bible; the most productive of originality, the most fertile in ideas, the most disciplinary of any work given to man. It is a misnomer to call any college Christian which studies pagan authors six or eight years and gives the Bible only a nominal recognition. . . .

"The sciences should have a large place. God has given us three books, each one revealing himself. The first is external nature, the second is the nature of man, and the third is the Word of God. It is absurd to suppose that these three works by the same omniscient Author are not in perfect accord. Wherever a lack of harmony appears, there is a lack of the truly scientific. . . . Our education should be Christocentric. In so far as any education is not Christocentric, it is partial, inadequate and unscientific."

THE SEARCH FOR GOD

We extract the following from the public press. The more we perceive the blind, unsuccessful groping of the worldly-wise after truth, the more do we value it; and the more do we appreciate the Scriptural declaration that "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him"—the humble.

"The era in which we live has often been called an age of religious doubt. Perhaps it could more correctly be described as one of religious hesitation and helplessness. The bewildering changes of recent years have created for us a new world, but we have not discovered a heaven to match it. The old conception of God has become impossible, and we have not found another to take its place. So has come about what a recent writer regards as "one of the most wonderful phenomena in the history of religion,"—the withdrawal of multitudes of good men from affiliation with the church. They have turned their backs upon Christianity, not at all because they are out of sympathy with the religious impulse, but because they are intellectually unconvinced. They have lost faith in God.

"Such is the train of thought suggested by a perusal of the Rev. S. D. McConnell's new book, entitled 'Christ'; and the

significance of the 'phenomenon' disclosed is best indicated in his own words:

"This is the situation of modern men by the thousands. 'Where is now my God?' they ask in every mood, from flippant contempt to moral despair. Nothing less than the rediscovery of God will serve the occasion. Most of the medicaments offered to the spiritual malady of the times must avail little or nothing because the diagnosis has not been sufficiently searching. It is no mere phase of superficial skepticism through which we are passing. Half the men we meet are 'agnostics,' and this whether they call themselves that or call themselves Christians. As Professor Flint truly says: 'As regards knowledge of God, religious and irreligious men take up the same attitude. Both endeavor to persuade men that there is and can be no such knowledge, that the best attainable is to be content with unreasoned and unenlightened belief.'

"But that sort of belief is becoming more unsatisfying every day. Belief in a God about whom the believer avowedly knows not anything may be sustained for a time as a sort of religious obligation, or as a surviving habit, but sooner or later must be given up. One cannot stand on tiptoe forever stretching up his hands to the inane. He gets tired, settles down upon his feet, and goes about his every-day business. This is what men are doing. Numbers of them have given up all idea of ever getting hold of anything coherent in the realm of religion, and disturb themselves but little about the matter. Still larger numbers yet join with the worshipers and listen to the preachers, hoping that they may yet somehow, be converted and enlightened."

"If we would understand the religious restlessness of our age, we must remember, says Dr. McConnell, that 'the idea of God, as it floats in the mind of the average man, is compounded of three or four inherited conceptions, each of which has to a large extent ceased to fit in with the other portions of his mental furniture, and all of which have grown to be impossible.' There is, first of all, the conception of the 'kingly God,' called into being by a Hebrew people who believed implicitly in absolute monarchy, and who regarded the earth as the center of the universe. There is, secondly, the conception of a God of Justice—a Roman God, worshiped by Calvin and Augustine and Tertullian. Thirdly, we have to deal with the idea of God considered purely as the Creator—an 'infinitely skilful Architect and Engineer,' who may awaken awe, dread, wonder, or curiosity, but who 'has no commerce with the conscience or the heart.' Fourthly must be mentioned the quasi-panteistic conception of a 'God Immanent,' which appeals to the mystic sense, but is 'too incoherent and evasive to serve the every-day uses of the average man.' Dr. McConnell continues:

"At this point speaks the philosophy which controls the thought of our time. Its word is, 'God is unknowable.' This is not the judgment of evil or shallow men. It is the deliberate conclusion of the earnest-minded and best men. Nor is it an excuse offered by intellectual laziness or moral indifference for declining a painful and difficult task. It is the sober judgment of those who have tried by 'searching to find out God,' and have failed. It is the conclusion of Christian and non-Christian philosophy alike. When Mr. Herbert Spencer had arrived at this conviction for himself, he preferred to state his conclusion in the words of Dr. Mansel, a dignitary of the Church of England. Spencer, the master in philosophy, formulates the dictum; Mansel, the master in theology, phrases it; Huxley, the master in science, gives it its name—Agnosticism; Balfour, a Christian prime minister, indorses and extends it. 'Who by searching can find out God?' To the challenge of Job comes the reply of today, 'No one.'

"But Agnosticism, in spite of all the forces ranged on its side, is not, according to Dr. McConnell's view, the final word. It has failed to reckon with the strongest argument of all, the argument of Christ. It has overlooked the words of one who said: 'Ye have not known him, but I know him. . . I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.'"

THE WORLD BY WISDOM KNOWS NOT GOD

"The discovery of the new element which has been named radium, is remarkable, not only as pointing to the existence of hitherto unsuspected forces in creation, but also as exposing the folly of the dogmatism of scientists. How frequently have we been told that much of Bible statement has collapsed before the tests of science, and that some finite theory of the universe has superseded the inspired narrative. Yet here we have the unexpected discovery of an element possessing the quality of developing illimitable heat and light without combustion, and which throws off 'spontaneously' minute particles traveling at the rate of 186,000 miles per second. It is said the discovery 'will be of vital interest to the future of humanity.' Meanwhile, it would not be without value if it inspired some of our scientists with a little more humility in

the presence of the handiwork of God, 'when he appointed the foundations of the earth.' (Prov. 8:29)"—*The Christian*.

CALLS SCRIPTURES INTOLERANT LIES

London, April 9.—Canon Hensley Henson of Westminster, one of the most distinguished of Anglican militant divines, has aroused a terrific storm by his outspoken declarations on the future of the Bible. He says:—

"The very fact that so many of our people are prepared to acquiesce in what they hear from the lectures, and even believe that, in some way or other, what they hear is divinely true, makes the present indiscriminate reading of the Bible in public an extremely perilous proceeding.

"Educated men have at their disposal a means of escape from the perplexities stirred in their minds by the incredible, the puerile, or the demoralizing narratives which the Old Testament contains. But the transition is prompt and obvious in untutored minds from a sacred volume—too sacred for discussion—to a pack of lies too gross for tolerance.

"What will be the place of the Bible in the future? It cannot be questioned that many causes have conduced to work something like a revolution among educated Christians throughout the world with respect to the sacred writings of Christianity. In time there will be a great revolution in current teaching with respect to the New Testament. *Three broad considerations* justify in the future the paramount place which the Bible has traditionally held in the life of Christian society:

"(1) The Bible remains the best manual of fundamental morality of which experience has any knowledge.

"(2) It is the best corrective of ecclesiastical corruption.

"(3) It is, perhaps, the most effectual check on the materialistic tendencies of modern life."

The Bishop of Norwich, the Rev. Dr. Sheepshanks, commenting on these remarks, says:

"There is not at the present time that bright, hopeful feeling among churchmen which prevailed until within the last few years. Religion is by no means gaining ground throughout the country. Definite belief in the Bible is on the wane, and the forces of indifference and irreligion are gaining strength."

"Sir Oliver Lodge asks, 'Now that religion is becoming so much more real, whether the formal statement of some of the doctrines we have inherited from medieval and still earlier times cannot wisely and inoffensively be modified?' He shocks many of his coreligionists by declaring that he regards the 'doctrine of atonement in its concrete form as a survival from barbarous times,' repudiating the belief in 'an angry God appeased by the violent death of Christ,' and maintaining that human nature now is 'rising to the conviction that we are part of nature and so part of God. In this sense the union of divinity is what science some day will tell us is the inner meaning of the redemption of men.'

"These outspoken utterances have caused public and private appeals to be made to the Archbishop of Canterbury, but so far no action has been taken."

* * *

The duplicity of the leading ministers respecting current doctrines of Christianity, the inspiration of the Bible, etc., is giving way. Increasing numbers of them dislike the dishonesty they have long been practising, and are publicly expressing the unbelief that for so long has possessed them—engendered by "higher criticism" and "evolution." The above are samples. As the clergymen find that the public in general will stand it, they will in larger numbers and in more explicit terms avow themselves.

We are glad of it. The more outspoken the error the more clear and the more precious the truth will appear to those who have it and love it. Those who are appealing to the Archbishop to have such utterances squelched little realize that the Archbishop and nearly all prominent ecclesiastics really sympathize with the views, and merely think such men as Canon Henson, Lodge and others too outspoken for public appreciation—yet.

It will soon be evident that only the few know or care much for such matters—that the vast majority merely draw near to the Lord on Sunday in a formal manner with their lips, while their hearts are immersed in other things.

Ere long the prediction will be fulfilled, "A thousand shall fall at thy side"—a thousand shall thus fall into unbelief to one who will stand firm for the Lord and his Word. "Who shall be able to stand?" Those who have on the whole armor of God, St. Paul explains. (Eph. 6:13) Our Lord says that those who will stand will be the "very elect."—Matt. 24:24.

A MINISTER'S INDICTMENT OF HIS PROFESSION

The New York *Independent* publishes anonymously an ar-

ticle from a clergyman under the title: "Why I Gave up the Ministry—a Soul's Tragedy." The writer claims that "every man in the ministry today" is "in much the same condition" as himself. He declares in this article, that of thirty men who were graduated with him from a theological seminary six years ago, ten have already abandoned the ministry. He says:

"I am thirty-two years old—at that point where I should be most active in that profession for which I have spent my life thus far in fitting myself, and just now ought to be most happy in it. Instead, I am deliberately resigning it and leaving all behind me. My purpose here is to set forth a statement of my motives, to analyze a situation, and to search for reasons why other men along with myself are doing this. . . .

"The church has sent its clergy out, or at least has allowed them to go out, to do many things in the name of religion which have nothing whatever to do with it. The clergy today are busy? Yes. But busy doing what? Not things they even were ordained to do. They are busy as managers of institutions, as members of committees, as representatives on boards, as trustees of asylums, orphanages, schools, and hospitals, dispensaries and colleges, and builders for themselves of parish-houses, where they organize and execute affairs of clubs and guilds, societies and institutes. They were not 'ordained' to do these things, nor did they need years of professional training to become able to do them. Thus it would seem that those men who are busiest in the ministry today are busy only doing things which lie wholly outside of that especial sphere, so far as there ever was a special sphere for work in which they were specially trained, in so far as they ever were specially trained. For my own part I must either find for myself some work in the church which is sufficiently unique to justify my continuing in the unique position of a 'calling,' or I must abandon the latter here to find the former somewhere else."

ADVANCING TOWARD CHURCH FEDERATION

The *Christian Observer* (Presbyterian) says:—

"In Britain, all the non-conformist churches have formed a 'free church union' in the interest of their common cause over against the established Episcopal Church. In Scotland, the United Presbyterian Church and the Free Church came together after years of negotiation to form the United Free Church of Scotland. In Canada, a good many years ago, the Methodists and Presbyterians, both of whom had several branches in the Dominion, united, so that there is only one Presbyterian and one Methodist Church in the wide domain north of us. In Australia the Presbyterians have gotten together, and now the Congregationalists and Presbyterians are talking of some sort of federal union. For some time there has been talk of union between the United Presbyterian and the Associate Reformed Presbyterian bodies in this country. And most of our readers are aware that union between our church and the Reformed [Dutch] Church has been mooted more than once."

FRANCE FREEING HERSELF FROM ROMANISM

The work of breaking the shackles of priesthood in France continues. Priests and nuns are no longer permitted to teach in the public schools: no private schools taught by them or others are licensed where government inspection is not permitted; the court houses are being stripped of crucifixes and other religious emblems; the army and navy are being freed from *bondage* to Romanism. The new conditions are roundly denounced by Catholics as high-handed, infidel and anti-Christian; but thus has Papacy ever fought Protestantism and liberty until they got free from her power; then she was propitious toward them, and, as in this country, would pose as a leader in the crusade for liberty and truth.

HIGHER CRITICS AND THE BIBLE

If the press report is correct, another college president has spoken—Dr. Samuel Plantz of Lawrence University. He said: "The fact is that men have overlooked the great truth that *the Bible is literature*, and put hard mechanical interpretations on what is to be regarded, and what was conceived and executed in the free and flowing spirit of imagination." It cannot be that a university president believes, if he believes anything, that men have not noticed that the Bible is literature. It must mean merely literature uninspired, like other "literature [fiction] conceived and executed in the free and flowing spirit of the imagination." He adds: "We must not feel that the Bible is worthless because Job is not a historical character; is Hamlet worthless because there never was a real Hamlet?"

If the Bible be "free and flowing imagination" is Christ historical or only an imaginary character? Would the Gospel be worthless with its Hamlet left out? What an "imagination" the imaginary Christ had! We need not now hesitate

to term much higher critical literature as "conceived and executed in the free and flowing spirit of imagination."

WHEN DID THE STONE STRIKE THE IMAGE?

We quote with approval the following clipping forwarded to us by one of our friends:—

"The image is the symbol of the world power in its whole future development and of its final destruction.

"The transfer of political power from Judah, now a captive of the nations, to the Gentile, is also indicated by it.

"The image measures the duration of the times of the Gentiles—Luke 21:24.

"The Stone is symbolic of a supernatural power, 'not made with hands,' heavenly, divine; the mountain is the Messianic kingdom; all is symbolic of Messiah and his kingdom.—Gen. 49:24; Isa. 2:1-4; Matt. 21:44; Luke 20:17, 18.

"The toes of the image correspond to the ten horns of the Beast of chapter seven, i. e., the horns are kingdoms, the toes are kingdoms.

"Now, when did the Stone strike?

"I. The Stone struck when there were feet and toes to be struck.

"There were no feet in the Babylonian day, none in the Medo-Persian, none in the Graeco-Macedonian, and none in the Roman, when the iron legs of a Western and Eastern Empire did not yet exist in a divided form; in other words, toes and feet of iron and clay must be looked for at a time later than the twelve Cæsars, and nearer to a time when the iron of imperialism and the clay of democracy in vain try to cleave together [We should say—the iron of civil power and the clay of ecclesiastical power]; and not until then does the Stone strike.

"It is evident, therefore, the Stone cannot have struck at the birth of Christ, nor at Pentecost, nor at the destruction of Jerusalem, nor at the edict of Constantine, for there were no feet or toes of ten kingdoms to strike.

"II. The Stone struck when the whole image went to pieces 'together;' i. e., suddenly and simultaneously.

"It did not strike repeatedly but once, and so shattered all together. The image did not decrease gradually, but 'together;' all became like chaff and was swept away that no place was found for them.

"Such total and final ruin of all the kingdoms that once composed the Roman Empire or succeeded it did not overtake them when Christianity began to be preached, or since; the world power of the Gentiles is still a reality, and will be until the Stone falls and grinds it to powder.

"It is therefore evident that such a crushing, annihilating blow is utterly unlike the peaceful power of the Gospel.

"III. The Stone struck before it began to grow, and not while it was growing into a great mountain.

"It would seem incredible that such a notion could ever have been drawn from this prophetic vision, but it is the popular idea that the Stone is growing while the kingdoms are shattering.

"In a certain volume of 'Messianic Prophecy' by a 'higher critic,' it reads: 'The living stone rolling down from the mountain, growing as it descends in strength and power, is a simple but appropriate symbol of the kingdom of God.'

"This is even worse, for here the Stone is said to be growing in strength and power before it strikes.

"Daniel says the Stone grew after it struck, and then covered the place once possessed by the kingdoms.

"There is not the least hint that as the Stone increased the image decreased. The two are not seen side by side, one gradually encroaching upon the other's ground; but with mighty blow on its brittle feet, the colossal form crushes into shapeless ruin, and is swept away like the chaff of the summer threshing floor, and for it no more place was found.

"It is therefore evident that if the world-power disappears in one simultaneous and sudden ruin, the Stone kingdom has not yet begun to grow and the mighty Stone is yet to fall.

"In other prophetic language 'the times of the Gentiles' are not yet fulfilled; Jerusalem is still trodden under foot of the Gentiles; their God-defying and man-defying governmental power is to meet its crisis and catastrophe in a day still future; the nations are yet to become angry against Jehovah and his Christ; the wine-press of the wrath of God is yet to be trodden, and not till then will the Son of man set up his kingdom, of whom it is written: 'And there was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.'—Daniel 7:14.

—W. J. Erdman.

"BRING FORTH THE BEST ROBE AND PUT IT ON HIM"

LUKE 15:11-24.—MAY 15.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"Come and let us return unto the Lord."—Hosea 6:1.

Our Lord gave three parables illustrative of God's grace: (1) The parable of the hundred sheep, of which one was lost and carefully sought. (2) The parable of the ten pieces of silver, of which one was lost and carefully sought. (3) The parable of the two sons, the lost one of whom was so eagerly welcomed back on his return.

The Pharisees "trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others." They had forms of righteousness, ceremonies, outward obedience to God and his laws, and reverence, piety and sanctity in outward appearance. We may assume that with some these matters were genuine—of the heart and not merely of formality; but the evidences are strong that there were few of this professed "holiness people" who were really at heart holy, as judged by the Lord's standard. The harvesting of the Jewish age surely found all of the true wheat, all the truly holy; and, so far as we have knowledge on the subject, comparatively few of these were found amongst those who outwardly made the profession of special sanctity—the Pharisees.

PUBLICANS AND SINNERS

There was a measure of truth in the assertion of the Pharisees that the majority of people were living in sin, neglecting the divine law, and thus living much after the manner of the Gentiles, who were without God and had no hope in the world. But our Lord wished them to see that they took a wrong attitude in the matter. Instead of holding aloof from their fellow Jews, their brethren, they should have been deeply interested in them and ready to do anything in their power to help them back to harmony with God and fellowship with themselves. Instead, the Pharisaical class rather delighted to proclaim that they were the heirs of God's favor and that the others were estranged from God. These estranged ones were called publicans and sinners. The sinners were the more or less immoral, who made no professions of keeping the Mosaic law, observances of the more sacred rites and ceremonies, holy days, etc. True, they took part in some of the festivals, but largely from the standpoint of the merchant and trader and sightseer rather than from the standpoint of worship offerer. The publicans were Jews who had become somewhat estranged to their laws and to the patriotic sentiments of the nation, and who accepted service under the Romans as tax-gatherers. They were looked down upon by those who held that the seed of Abraham, heirs of the great oath-bound covenant, should never, in any sense of the word, become the servants of a foreign master, and particularly should not serve the foreign master in collecting taxes from his brothers; for they held that it was not proper that they should pay taxes to Cæsar's government.

Our Lord, though attentive to all of the duties of the Jew under the Law, was out of touch with such Pharisaism, and instead of holding himself aloof from the publicans and sinners, "the common people," he preached his message to everyone who had ears to hear, making no distinction as between scribe and Pharisee, publican and sinner. For this the Pharisees scorned him, considering that thus he acknowledged himself and his teachings to be on a lower plane—more closely allied with the common people, the sinner class. The three parables already referred to were spoken particularly as a reproof to the Pharisees—to show them the impropriety of their attitude toward the masses, "the common people."

Our Lord did not deny that the publicans and sinners were in the wrong, were in some respects further estranged from God than the Pharisees; but he wished the latter to see that their hearts were not in accord with the mind of the Lord, else they would not feel so indifferent toward their brethren. The three parables were lessons drawn from the common affairs of life—which man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one would not go after it? or which woman of you having a bracelet with ten pieces of silver ornaments prized as a marriage memento, would not search diligently if one of these pieces were lost? and if so, why should they not consider a brother of much more value than the sheep or a coin, and why not seek for the brother and endeavor to bring him back again? As capping the climax came the parable of the prodigal son, which constitutes our present lesson. It represents our heavenly Father and his attitude toward the two classes. The elder son represented the Pharisees; the younger man, the prodigal, represented the publicans and sinners; the father represented God. The parable showed God's willingness to receive back again the penitent one, and forcefully represented the impropriety, the inconsistency, of the Pharisees in objecting to the recovery of their brothers from the ways of sin and their return to the family of God.

The wrong course of the publicans and sinners is graphi-

cally illustrated: they had been in God's favor under the Mosaic Covenant, but feeling released from the restraints of home, the restraints of the law of Moses, they had wandered from God into the ways of sin and suffering, looking for pleasures and prosperity in the wrong direction. They should have been glad to remain under divine protection and care and to have enjoyed the Father's house and all of its blessings. They should have realized the blessed privilege they enjoyed of being separated by the Lord from the world in general; but they did not appreciate this, and had gone off into sin, and, though really Israelites, had been living after the manner of the Gentiles, and worse than some of them. They had been serving Satan, and many of their sicknesses were the result, as well as much of their destitution and especially their moral degradation. God's covenant with them as Jews was that, if obedient to his arrangements, they should have temporal prosperity. In this particular their position was the reverse of ours, to whom the Lord promises temporal adversity and spiritual prosperity under the Gospel dispensation.

Satan may be said to be master of this far country—afar from God and his love and protection and care. He it was who degraded them to the level of swine, and in his service they starved for any satisfying portion. The swine in the parable represented the worldly, those engrossed in the things of the present time and wholly indifferent to spiritual matters, and this prodigal is represented as having nothing more for his sustenance than have the worldly; yet there was a difference between him and the swine, for while the swine could fill their bellies and grow fat on the bean pods of the locust or carob tree, the prodigal found it hard to subsist on that diet. He realized his degradation. "He came to himself," he realized that he had been insane, stupid, dreaming, when he left so gracious a father's house and so great blessings as he had once enjoyed and come down to this degraded position, where his whole being hungered and thirsted for the blessings of the home he had left. The first thing he did was to resolve to will, and then he proceeded to do. The willing would have amounted to nothing had it not been followed by the doing, but the doing could not have preceded the willing.

The picture drawn by the Lord of the beggared and tattered prodigal, with a look of shame and fearful forebodings of what reception he might have from his father and from his brother, is graphically set forth in the Lord's parable. His elder brother, represented by the Pharisees, was not on the lookout for him; but the father, representing God, saw him a long way off—was looking for him, was compassionate toward him, and, lest he should be discouraged in his fearfulness, the father ran to meet him to welcome him. His reception was as though he had never sinned: the best robe, the shoes, the ring, all were his, and the feast proclaimed the father's joy to the entire household. This is given by our Lord to show the Pharisees how God viewed the returning of these publicans and sinners who were hearing the Gospel message and coming back to lives of righteousness and harmony with God.

SCRIBES AND PHARISEES THE ELDER SON

The majority of our Lord's followers were of this class, and the Pharisees, instead of hating the Lord and hating the message which was attracting these former wanderers back to love and service and hope and of fellowship with God, should have been glad. Then, picturing the Pharisees and their attitude in the matter, the Lord showed them that they were angry with the Father because of his goodness, and were refusing to go into the feast to which they were made welcome by the Father, and which they should have enjoyed with these returning prodigals. The loss would be theirs, the gain would be that of the more humble minded. The Father, who was pleased to give them his blessings in every way and pleased to continue with them, would not force them to have his favors, even though by nature they were his chosen ones. If they would not come in to share the Father's hospitalities with the returned prodigal they could not share them at all. The Gospel feast is but one feast, and all who participate in it must come in under the Father's terms and arrangements.

While the parable is thus seen to be, strictly speaking, a Jewish parable which in none of its features includes the Gentiles, we may nevertheless draw from it an illustrative application to our day. As we have frequently noted, fleshly Israel was a type or foreshadowing of spiritual Israel, and the harvest of the Jewish age a pattern or foreview of the harvest of this Gospel age. In a broad sense of the word the whole world may be viewed in the light of this parable. Those who have sought to remain in harmony with the heavenly Father—those who have striven to walk in holiness of life and in obedience to the divine will—may be considered the elder brother;

while the younger brother represents those described by the Apostle in Romans, first chapter, "Who when they knew God glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God," etc. "Wherefore God gave them up to uncleanness, to the lusts of their own hearts," etc. "For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections. . . . and even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient, being filled with all unrighteousness," etc.

From this standpoint nearly the whole world of mankind is still in a far country, in the land of the enemy, under the blinding influences of the god of this world. And now by the grace of God we learn in advance that ultimately an opportunity is to be given to all of these everywhere to come to themselves, to realize what they have lost, and come to realize the Father's willingness to receive them back again—an opportunity for reformation during the Millennial age under the ministry of him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood. To those who are in the right attitude of heart this message gives joy and rejoicing, while to another class today the very thought of the estranged world being granted an opportunity for returning to the heavenly Father and to have the robe of Christ's righteousness placed upon them, and to be accepted to sonship to God again, is a repulsive thought, just as the thought of the favor of God going to the publicans and sinners was repulsive to most of the Pharisees of our Lord's time.

The first returning prodigal under the new dispensation will be the poor Jew—for thus it is written, "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant with them when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the Gospel they are enemies for your sake; but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." (Rom. 11:25-30) The Prophet describes the experiences of the Jew as a prodigal returning to the Father's house, saying, that the Lord will pour upon them the spirit of prayer and of supplication, and they shall look upon him whom they have pierced and shall mourn because of him. Neither will they be the only ones upon whom the Father will pour his Spirit, as it is written, "After those days [after the Gospel age, the time of dealing with the servants and hand-maidens only] the Lord shall pour out his Spirit upon all flesh"—Joel 2:28, 29.

MANKIND IN GENERAL PRODIGALS

The same thought is brought to our attention in Nebuchadnezzar, who in a general way represents the madness upon the world. At the end of the days—at the end of his period of bestial degradation—he came to himself, and we read, "At the end of the days, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and my understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High and I praised and honored him that liveth forever . . . my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and brightness returned unto me." (Dan. 4:33) So at the end of the Gentile times, after 1915, reason will begin to come back to the prodigal ones, and the light of the Lord Jesus will begin to shine in every quarter, and a blessing will come to the whole human family released from the blinding influences of the adversary. The Prophet again describes this coming blessing to the whole world, saying, "At that time many nations shall go and say, Come, let us go to the mountain of the Lord's house; he shall teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for then the law shall go forth from Mount Zion [the spiritual kingdom, the glorified Christ] and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem [earthly representatives of the Millennial kingdom and glory]."

"THE SAME YESTERDAY, TODAY AND FOREVER"

It is remarkable how some people can see a little, yet are unable to grasp the glorious vision of divine wisdom and power. For instance, Rev. Alex McKenzie, writing along the lines of divine compassion and the open door for those who will return to the Father's house, couches his thought in the following words:

"It would not be amiss to say that the Gospel of Christ is the Gospel of the second chance. Men have curiously wondered if there was a second chance in another world. There is something much better than that, a second chance in this world. 'Now,' cries the great Archer, 'now is the accepted time to try again! Now is the day to hit the mark.' Repentance is a new opportunity. So the prodigal came back to his father, saying, 'Father, before heaven and in thy sight I have missed the mark. Let me be as one of thy servants to make bows and arrows for better men.' But his father understood the confession. 'Bring

out a new bow and give it to him.' The brother said, 'But, father, he has had his bow and missed the mark.' 'Bring out the best bow and give it to him. My boy has come back to try again.'"

We are glad that our heavenly Father gives us and our brothers and sisters and children opportunities to recover themselves after they have wandered into sin—opportunities to profit by the lessons of life and the sad experience of being strangers, aliens from God. It is well for us that we can see this. Fortunate it is that so few have gotten the thought that one failure, one mistake, would seal their destiny. Glad we are that so many are able to realize the divine compassion and forgiveness manifested through Jesus, which makes allowances not only for our original estrangement but for various missteps subsequently. But shall we limit the grace of this God when he himself has expressed no limits? Shall we say that it is only to those who have heard his voice and come into his family in the present time that his grace shall be extended at all? Why is it that so many find it difficult to realize that the same God who has had compassion on their weaknesses and failures and has accepted them back as prodigals, without any violation of justice, may not be equally generous toward those who as yet have not even had an ear to hear or the eyes to see his grace and goodness in Christ?

It is passing strange that now, in the dawning of the new dispensation, as the Lord brings to our attention the glorious features of his plan, which shall surely make for the uplift of the world of mankind and their complete restitution if they are willing, back to all that was lost in Eden—purchased for them by the Father through the gift of his Son at Calvary—these blessings should arouse the opposition and anger of any who have ever named the name of Christ, or have ever been made in any measure partakers of the Father's spirit. How is it that such close their ears to the message respecting our dear Redeemer—"This is the true light that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world?" How is it that they refuse to give credence to the message which the Lord sent by the angel choir on the plains of Bethlehem—"Behold, we bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people?"

NONE BUT REPENTANT PRODIGALS RECEIVED

In the parable there was joy at the return of the prodigal from the fields of sin and disloyalty, and this was explained by the Lord to mean that there is joy in heaven over the return of every one who, after being a child of God, has wandered from the Father's house. The same principle now holds true in this Gospel age, and any who, having been accepted in Christ, shall wander away and return again in true humility, as represented in the parable, may again experience God's favor and have their past forgiven, and the robe of Christ's righteousness shall cover their blemishes. They shall have the evidences of divine favor and mercy again. We can see that God's heart is large enough to have made a provision for the world of mankind through the same Redeemer and through the same precious atonement sacrifice; and not only do we rejoice to see this unfolding of the larger features of the divine plan, but we are sure that the angels in heaven likewise rejoice to see the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God as exhibited toward his fallen creatures.

Nothing in the above is meant to intimate in any sense of the word that any will be received of God at any time on any other terms than are represented in this parable, in the case of the prodigal. The prodigal must will to return, the prodigal must strive to return, but the Father will meet him on the way to encourage him, to receive him, to bless him, to bring him into all the glorious things which he has in reservation for those who love him and his righteousness. There is a part, however, in all such reformation which belongs in some measure to divine providence—it is that represented by the words, "When he came to himself." Sin and degradation have brought unreason, unbalanced judgment, and have made the good to appear bad, the light to appear darkness, the true to appear false, and contrariwise. It is of divine providence that the eyes of our understanding open to see just where we are, and to realize our need and our loss. And so, as we have shown above, divine promises reach out for the world of mankind and attest to us that in due time God will cause reason to come to mankind that they may appreciate their lessons and desire to return to the Father's house. The will and the effort, however, they must exercise, else the results will not be attained. All through the Millennial age mankind will be brought to a discernment of their needs, and as they respond they will have the Father's provision in Christ for meeting them on the way and helping them back through the provisions of restitution to a condition that will be full of peace and blessing in accord with the Almighty.

The eye of some prodigal may rest upon this article, and he

may feel a longing for the Father's house, the family association and the gracious blessings and spiritual fellowship which belong there and which he in the past enjoyed and has left. If so, we remind him that this thought is the beginning of the return to reason—he is coming to himself. Let him arise immediately and go unto the Father through the appointed way, the Lord Jesus; let him be assured of the Father's willingness to

receive him; but let him not return in any self-righteous or self-excusing attitude of mind, which would be sure to frustrate the blessing hoped for. He must go back as did the prodigal, with contrition of heart, with full confession of his error, and with a willingness to take the very lowest place in the Father's family as a servant. It is to such that the Father is pleased to give a full restoration of the privileges of sonship.

ONLY THE HUMBLE SHALL BE EXALTED

MARK 10:35-45.—MAY 22.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

Several weeks intervened between the incidents of the last lesson and the present one. In that time the Lord had crossed over Jordan in answer to the request of Mary and Martha that he should come and heal their brother Lazarus, who was sick. Jesus arrived intentionally too late for this, but awakened Lazarus from sleep, and thereby aroused a great storm of opposition, especially amongst the scribes and Pharisees, who sought to put him to death. Knowing that his time was not yet come, he retired into a mountain of northern Judea, but at the time of this lesson he with his twelve apostles was *en route* for Jerusalem. He had just explained to them more particularly the ignominy, shame and death which he would experience, and repeated his assurance of his resurrection. The rich young ruler had just visited him, and gone away sorrowful upon learning the terms of discipleship. Jesus had just said, "How hardly shall they who have riches enter into the kingdom?" The apostles had inquired what they should have since they had left all, and Jesus assured them that they should have a hundred fold more in this present time, with persecution, and in the world to come everlasting life.

The context says that Jesus was walking in advance of the twelve, who were discussing matters amongst themselves, over-awed by the stupendous things which the Lord had declared to be imminent. The courage of our Lord in the narrow way fills us with admiration. What a strong character was his! He had no thought of turning back; he was intent upon accomplishing his Father's will—upon sacrificing himself in the interest of others. A noble pattern the apostles saw before them—greatness in humility, victory through service.

A GOODLY HERITAGE DESIRED

It was at this time that James and John approached the Lord in a private manner. Matthew tells us that their mother Salome was with them and really made the request for them in their names. Salome is supposed to have been the sister of Mary, the aunt of Jesus, in which event James and John were his full cousins. Realizing that matters were drawing to a crisis, they sought of the Lord an assurance that they two might be very close to him in the kingdom, one on his right hand and one on his left, the two positions of chiefest favor.

Our Lord did not reprove them, for doubtless he read in their hearts a great love and loyalty toward himself; and the desire for the positions indicated not merely the desire for the honors and authority implied, but specially because this would bring them closer to himself. Had the Lord seen in their hearts an evil form of ambition, undoubtedly he would have reproved it on the spot. His answer, however, was so framed as to impress these brothers and all of his followers since with what is implied in joint-heirship with the Lord in the kingdom. Very forceful is the expression, "Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"

The cup signifies experiences—as, for instance, when our Lord said, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" (John 18:11) Our Lord wished his disciples to see clearly that the Father had poured for him a special cup of experiences, and had required of him special baptism into death, as conditions precedent to his glory and kingdom; and that whoever would become his associates in the kingdom must become also his associates in the sufferings of this present time—in the ignominy and whatever experiences the Father might see best to permit as tests of faith and devotion and character. Our Lord did not refer to the Memorial Supper cup, but to the experiences which it symbolized, even as he did not refer to water baptism, but to the baptism into death which is symbolized by the water immersion.

How heart-searching was this question! It meant, Are ye willing? because it would be impossible for the disciples to have known their own ability except in the sense of having confidence in God that he would give the ability to those who had their wills thoroughly subjected to his. This is illustrated in the symbolical baptism, in which one no more buries himself than he raises himself. We merely surrender our wills, our all, to the Lord, and he by his Word and grace works in us to

will and ultimately to do his good pleasure—expecting from us only the possibilities, and assisting us to these with grace sufficient for us, for every time of need.

"MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR YOU"

That these two noble apostles were not inspired by selfish ambitions in this request is evidenced by their prompt reply to the Lord's searching question and later on evidenced by their faithfulness even unto death. They said, "We are able"—that is, "We are willing. God helping us, we will sacrifice everything to follow in your footsteps; we will count nothing dear unto us; we will lay aside every weight and every sinful besetment; we will run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." This we may assume to be a larger statement of their devotion.

Our Lord's love and sympathy went out to them afresh as he answered them, guaranteeing that with such willingness of heart they should indeed have the experiences necessary to fit them for a place in the kingdom. What a comfort this is to even the weakest of the Lord's followers who are sincere.

The Lord looketh at the heart, and if he sees there full devotion to himself, he is pleased to grant to such his blessing, his aid, saying, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." "My grace is sufficient for thee—my strength is made perfect in weakness." We, too, are desirous of sharing the kingdom with our Lord, yet not from love of exaltation above others, but from a desire to have this evidence that we please our Father and our Lord Jesus—to have this closeness of relationship to him, and to have the privilege of participation with our dear Redeemer in the great work of blessing all the families of the earth in due time. It is well that we should have the Lord's answer clearly before our minds, and know that unless we partake of his cup and are immersed into his death, we can have no share in his kingdom of glory. Let us then count all things else as loss and as dross to obtain this necessary experience. As it comes to us let us not be fearful, nor think strange of the fiery trials that shall try us, as though some strange thing had happened unto us. On the contrary, even hereunto were we called, that we might now suffer with the Lord and by and by be glorified together with him.

As for the particular place to be occupied in the kingdom by the sons of Zebedee or by us, our Lord pointed out that the assigning of such positions was in the Father's hands—the choicest positions shall be given to those for whom they have been prepared by the Father. Not that we are to understand that the Father prepared the places in advance by any arbitrary divisions, but rather that the Father's pre-arranged plan is that each of the followers of Jesus shall have positions of honor in the kingdom proportionate to the zeal of their faithfulness in the present time—for none shall have any part in the kingdom who do not now prove faithful.

THE MEEKEST AND MOST ZEALOUS

It is not for us to decide the zeal and faithfulness of the apostles—to say which two would better fill these positions of chiefest honor. The Father will make no mistake. It will not surprise us, however, should we find the Apostle Paul in one of these two positions. His faithful, loving zeal and loyalty seem to shine out conspicuously even amongst those who were also faithful and loyal. It is not for us to have any ambitious feelings respecting this matter, except that we desire always to serve the Lord and be pleasing to him, and eventually to be as close to him as possible. When we remember that the closer we come to him in the present trials and experiences and sufferings with faithfulness the closer we will be to him in the future, it explains to us the meaning of the Apostle's words when speaking of his severe trials: he called them light afflictions but for a moment, working out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.—2 Cor. 4:17.

We recall that there had been, a little while before, some rivalry amongst the apostles as to which should be greatest in the kingdom. At that time Jesus took a little child as an exemplification of candor and guilelessness, and assured them that unless they became as little children—simple-hearted, honest, candid, they could in no wise have any part in his kingdom.

Now, when the ten other disciples learned the special mission of Salome and the request made by and for James and John, they were indignant at them. Possibly some of them, Judas included, were very anxious for the authority and power and dignity of the throne, but without the very special love and longing to be near the Master himself, which seem to have influenced James and John in their request. But Jesus set matters straight with them all, and turned their displeasure into an opportunity for another good lesson, by the assurance that the chief positions in the kingdom would be given along the lines of meritorious service, and that thus each one of them would have his opportunity to strive for the chief position by striving to render service to the others.

Amongst the Gentiles the rulers are lords, who do no serving but are served, but among the followers of Jesus the rule is to be reversed; he who would serve most was to be esteemed most highly. What a beauty there is in the divine order of things! how thoroughly all who are right minded can sympathize with the principles here laid down! How reasonable they are and how contrary to the spirit of the world. Truly, the Lord's followers will in this sense of the word be a peculiar people in their zeal for good works—for serving one another and for doing good unto all men as they have opportunity. The Apostle Peter emphasizes this point (1 Pet. 5:6), "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted, and he that exalteth himself shall be abased."—Luke 14:11.

OUR LORD SERVANT OF ALL

The Lord did not have one standard for his followers and another standard for himself. Consequently, when they heard him say, Whosoever of you will be chief shall be servant of all, they could promptly recognize that this was the course that he had pursued—that he had been servant to them all; and it was on account of the services that he was continually rendering them that they delighted to serve him, to acknowledge him their Master and to walk in his steps. Indeed, they had seen only a small fragment of the Lord's sacrificing and of its far-reaching influence as a service to others. We can see this as we recognize the fact that our Lord was about to die, not merely for his disciples, not merely for the Jews, but to be a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, that the whole world eventually might have a blessing—a blessed opportunity for coming to life eternal through the merit of his service. Our Lord called this to their attention, saying, "For verily the Son of man came not to be ministered unto [served] but to minister [serve], and to give his life a ransom for many." This is one of the very explicit statements of Scripture respecting the object of our Lord's death—that it was not for his own

sins that he died, that on the contrary it was for ours, and that in thus dying he gave himself a ransom price—a corresponding price for the sins of the whole world.

No other lesson requires to be so carefully learned by the Lord's people as this lesson of humility. It has to do with the very humblest of the flock, as well as with those who are teachers and elders and pilgrims, etc.; but the degree of force that seems to come with the besetment or temptation seems to multiply in proportion to the position and attainments of the individual. Pride and ambition may be in those who have no official position in the church, often asserted in fault-finding and criticism which, to the hearers, is intended to imply superior wisdom or ability on the part of the critic—that his wisdom only waits for opportunity to manifest his greatness above his fellows. We are not objecting to a kindly brotherly word of criticism given privately and with a view to helpfulness, but merely to the kind which vaunteth itself and seeks to do injury to the reputation of another occupying a preferred position.

"BE NOT MANY OF YOU TEACHERS"

As the Apostle intimates, however, this besetment bears chiefly upon those who have some talent, some ability, and whom their fellows have to some extent honored as teachers. Little men, like little ships with broad sails, are in great danger of being capsized if too strong a wind of popularity play upon them. Not only so, but we believe that even the most humble, the most faithful, the most zealous to be servants of the cause, have continual need to be on their guard lest their good intentions should be used of the adversary as a trap for their ensnarement. Let us remember the Apostle's words, "Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that a man [who is a teacher] shall receive greater condemnation"—he is exposed to greater trials and temptations as a result. This must not hinder any who have talents from using them, but it should make each one very careful that he does not think more highly of himself than he ought to think, but to think soberly. If the judgment of the majority of the congregation does not recognize his adaptation to the service of a teacher, he should humbly accept its conclusion as correct, no matter how highly he had thought of himself previously. And even if the majority should conclude that he is worthy of a position as a teacher in Zion, he should tread very softly before the Lord, very humbly, realizing that those who in any degree attempt to impart instruction in spiritual things to others are to that extent acting as representatives and mouthpieces of the Lord himself, the Head of the body; and all should keep in mind the Lord's words in this Golden Text and his own exemplification of the matter—that he who serves most and not he who lords it most should have the chief respect of the Lord's people.

THE LAST SUPPER

MATT. 26:17-30.—MAY 29.

Jesus and the apostles came to Bethany, near Jerusalem, that they might eat the Passover Supper in the holy city, and that our Lord might suffer at the hands of his enemies, as he had foretold his disciples—that thus he might accomplish an atonement for the sins of the people. His arrival was just a week before his crucifixion. The following day at the supper Mary anointed him. On the next day he rode on the ass into Jerusalem, was not received, wept over the city, and said, "Your house is left unto you desolate." On the following day he visited the temple, driving out the money changers with the scourge of cords. The next day he gave his last public teaching in the temple, declaring himself to be the light of the world. Every night he seems to have returned to Bethany to the house of Lazarus and Martha and Mary, which was also the home of himself and the apostles whenever they were in that vicinity. The next day, Wednesday, the Lord remained in Bethany in retirement, and on Thursday sent two of his disciples to make ready the Passover, which was eaten by himself and the twelve that night—"the same night in which he was betrayed."

The feast of Passover lasted a week, and was one of the most important celebrated under the Jewish arrangement. During that week, leaven, as a type of sin, was carefully put away from all the food and destroyed in every house, in intimation of the holiness and purity, the unleavenness, of the Lord's people—spiritual Israel—typically represented by natural Israel. The whole week was a festival of rejoicing because of God's deliverance of Israel from the bondage of Egypt. The feast-week began on the 15th day of the first month, Jewish reckoning, but it was preceded on the 14th by the killing of the lamb, and the sprinkling of its blood upon the doorposts of the houses, as a memorial of what took place in Egypt on the

night in which the Lord spared the first-born of Israel under the blood and slew the first-born of the Egyptians, and thus made the latter willing to let his people go free. It was for the eating of this memorial lamb on the night previous to the beginning of the Passover feast-week that our Lord sent his disciples to make ready, as explained in our lesson.

Luke tells us that it was Peter and John who were sent on this mission, and Mark tells us that they were to know the man at whose house the feast would be held by his carrying a pitcher of water. It has been surmised by some that the house was that of Mark's mother, Mary, and that the upper room thus used was the same one in which the apostles subsequently met and where the pentecostal blessing was poured out upon them. We do know that it was at the house of this Mary that many gathered to pray for the release of Peter from prison. It was a "large upper room" and was already prepared with a suitable dining couch of proper dimensions. It has been surmised that Jesus took this indirect way of indicating the place that Judas might not be informed until the time for the gathering, so that there might be no interruption of the feast and our Lord's subsequent discourses, recorded in John 14:17, on the part of those who were seeking his apprehension. Peter and John made ready the Passover in the sense of furnishing and preparing the lamb, the unleavened bread, bitter herbs and the fruit of the vine, and in the evening, at the appropriate time, the entire company gathered for the celebration.

A LESSON IN HUMILITY

Luke only records (22:24-30) that there was strife amongst the apostles on this occasion, though John (13) also implies this. We are not to suppose that the apostles were actuated wholly by ambition and selfishness. We may well suppose that the strife was for position of nearness to the Master because

of their love for him. The Lord improved the opportunity to give them a most wonderful discourse, which doubtless lasted them through the remainder of their lives. They had arrived late in the afternoon, over dusty roads, and, not being of the wealthy class, no servants were there to receive them and to wash their feet; and instead of thinking to do this one for another, to their mutual comfort, they had been striving with one another for favored positions at the table, John evidently gaining the most desired position next to the Master—possibly accorded him because he was not only a relative, and one whom Jesus specially loved, but also because he was the youngest of their number.

The customs of olden times differ from those of the present in many respects. In eating they reclined on a couch surrounding a table. They leaned on their left elbow and used the right hand for conveying food to the mouth; thus their heads were brought comparatively close together, while their feet extended out behind over the couch. Apparently permitting the dispute to run its course and the supper to begin, Jesus arose and, going behind them, began to wash the feet of one after another of them. Such a service rendered to them by the Master was of course a severe reproof. They should have thought of washing his feet and each other's and now probably wished that they had done so, but at the time each was apparently intent upon establishing the fact that he was in no degree inferior to the others. They had forgotten so soon the lesson of a short time before—that he who would be greatest amongst them should be servant of all. Our Lord here had the opportunity of illustrating this very matter: he was willing to serve them all, was continually serving them all in the spiritual things, and hence they regarded him truly and properly as their Master; but now he showed them his humility to the extent that he was willing to serve them in the most menial capacity also. Valuable lesson! May it never lose its import amongst the Lord's true followers. Some, however, have erred in supposing that this became an institution or ordinance similar to the Lord's Supper and baptism: to our understanding the lesson to be conveyed by this symbol, and its application to each of us at any time and at any place, would be that we should seek to render some useful service to the brethren regardless of how menial it might be, and that so doing to them it would be reckoned of the Lord as though done unto him.

"BETTER THAT HE HAD NOT BEEN BORN"

It was while they were at supper that Jesus, appearing very sorrowful, gave as an explanation that it would be one of his own chosen twelve that would betray him and thus become accessory to his death—one of those who dipped with him in the dish, partaking of the same supper, the same bread, the same roasted lamb. Then he pointed out that although this was all written, and thus no alteration would be found in respect to the divine plan, nevertheless it signified a very gross breach of friendship—one sad to contemplate. It really made no difference to the Lord, so far as his intention and consecration were concerned, whether he were apprehended by the rulers without any betrayal or whether the betrayal were by a comparative stranger or by a disciple: the fact would make no change in the divine arrangement; but it was a cause for great sorrow that it should be one who had been a bosom friend and disciple.

"It had been good for that man if he had not been born," implies to us that, from the Lord's standpoint, Judas had already experienced so large a measure of knowledge and opportunity for better things that his responsibility for his act was complete, and that there would be no hope for him at any time in the future. We will certainly have no objection to it if the Lord should find some excuse for granting Judas a further opportunity for correcting his character, but we see no Scriptural reason for thinking there will be such further opportunity. From our standpoint it appears as though he sinned against great light, experience and knowledge—contact with the Lord and under the power of the holy Spirit—one of those commissioned to heal diseases and cast out devils in the name of the Lord, and as his representative, and using his power. His end was a sad one: every suicide by his act confesses his wish that he had never been born.

"LORD, IS IT I?"

Another account tells us that each of the disciples inquired of the Lord, "Is it I?" and last of all Judas. The others felt sure that they had nothing to do with it and wished the Lord to confirm their innocence, and the eleven having asked and no response from the Lord indicating their culpability, the implication would be that Judas was the one; yet such was his spirit of bravado that he also asked the Master, "Is it I?" Jesus answered him, "Thou hast said," or "It is you." How noble was the Lord's reproof; he could have scarcely said less—not a threat, not an imprecation, not a manifestation of bit-

terness, but merely an expression of sorrow and of pity. What a lesson for us! Our enemies are to be pitied, not hated; to be blessed as far as we are able, but never to be cursed. It is well for all of Jesus' disciples to watch and pray against any Judas-like disposition to sell the Lord or his truth or his brethren for money or other selfish considerations. Knowing that there will be others of the Judas class, let us guard our hearts and ask, "Lord, is it I?"

While they were eating the Passover Supper prescribed by the Jewish law, or rather while they were still at the table after they had finished the supper proper, Jesus took some of the remaining bread—which in shape at least more particularly resembled what we today would call crackers—he blessed it, broke it and gave it to his disciples saying, "Take, eat, this is my body." Another evangelist adds, "broken for you." Romanists and some Protestants claim that in consequence of the form of this statement, "This is my body," and the next statement, "This is my blood," we should understand that whenever the memorial bread and fruit of the vine have been consecrated they are changed from being bread and wine and become the actual body of Christ and his actual blood. We dissent from this as being most unreasonable and most untrue; the bread and the wine merely symbolized or represented the body and blood of our Lord. In absolute proof of this note the fact that our Lord at the time he used these words had not yet been broken and his blood had not yet been shed. Hence to have used these expressions in any other way than the way we do use them, namely, as meaning that the bread and the wine represented his body and his blood, would have meant to misrepresent the truth—to have falsified; and we cannot perceive that this was done or would have been proper to have been done by the Lord or any of his followers.

The bread, as our Lord explained, represented the bread from heaven—his flesh which he sacrificed for the sins of the world. He invites all of his followers to eat of it, and we partake of his flesh when we appropriate to ourselves the blessings, the mercy, the grace secured by the breaking of his body. We thus appropriate to ourselves the benefits of the sacrifice which secures to us the forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with the Father.

"THE BLOOD OF THE NEW COVENANT"

He took the cup and gave thanks and gave it to the apostles, saying, "Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the New Covenant which is shed for many for the remission of sins." This represents my blood—it will continue to represent my blood with you and with all my dear followers at all times, and will be to you on such occasions a reminder of my death and of the covenant which was thus sealed between God and sinners by myself as the great Mediator between God and man.

The New Covenant or New Testament sealed by the blood of Christ is the one that is mentioned throughout the Old Testament and referred to by the Apostle in his letter to the Hebrews (8:6-13; 10:29; 12:20). It supersedes the Law Covenant. The latter, mediated through Moses, provided that whoever would do the commandments of the law should have everlasting life; but the New Covenant provides for mercy, and, recognizing the fact that in our fallen condition we cannot do the things we would, the Mediator of the New Covenant, by his death on behalf of the people, is able to keep Justice whole and yet deal with us according to our intentions instead of according to our actual accomplishments, and meanwhile to lift mankind up, up, up, out of degradation to that plane or condition of being where they will be able to do perfectly all the good desires of true and honest hearts.

The Apostle Paul shows us that this bread and cup had a still further and broader signification. He it was who had so clear an understanding of the "mystery"—Christ in you—that we are members of the mystical body of Christ, participators now in his sufferings, and, if faithful, to be members of his glorious body and participators also in his glory. From this standpoint, as the Apostle explains, the broken loaf represents not only the breaking of the Lord Jesus personally, but the breaking of all his mystical members throughout this Gospel age; and the drinking of the cup was not only his own participation in death that he might thus seal the New Covenant on behalf of mankind, but that his invitation to us to join with him in partaking of the cup, "Drink ye all of it," implied that we could have participation with him in the sufferings and death in the present time—participation with him in the inauguration of the New Covenant conditions during the Millennial reign. How grand is the thought, how deep, how broad! What a wonderful privilege that we should be permitted to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ and to look forward to a participation in his glories in the future. From this standpoint we see fresh force in his word to the apostles noted in a previous lesson, namely, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that