

## VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

### THE STORY OF ADAM AND EVE

Prof. L. T. Townsend of Boston University, discussing the credibility of the account of man's creation given in Genesis, says:—

"It is possible and perhaps probable that the world is to witness shortly among nominally Christian people one of the most resolutely contested intellectual conflicts between belief and unbelief that has been known since the dawn of the Christian era."

He expresses the conviction that a return to faith in the Bible's records will be advantageous to the world at large as well as to Christianity, and declares that scientists have been obliged to make so many changes of late that it should make them more modest. His words are:—

"The readjustments of astronomical and geological theories during the last quarter of a century, which in every instance have been making for, rather than against, the beliefs of the primitive Christian Church, and the remarkable discoveries in archaeology which are affording the strongest possible defense for the credibility of the Bible, together with the fact that many of the ablest scholars are taking issue with much that is called higher criticism, ought to suggest that modesty rather than egotism and dogmatism is peculiarly becoming in those who are posing as leaders of modern thought and reformers in the theological world.

"It can no longer be rationally questioned that the sciences of anatomy, of geology, of archaeology, of philology, of ethics and of theology unite in demolishing all theories of naturalism as to the character and condition of the earliest inhabitant of the earth of whom there is any record.

"And the evolutionary hypothesis that the human race began in a savage state and slowly worked up to its present condition, consuming in this development a hundred thousand years, more or fewer, is, in the presence of established facts, an assumption as groundless as anything one can imagine. On the other hand, a sudden emergence from the savage state to one represented by the ancient civilizations of Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, and that of many other countries is not an emergence of which history shows any evidence. Hence the theory that the human family began high up in civilized and social life, but afterward suffered a decadence, has probabilities in its favor that amount well-nigh to an absolute certainty.

"What may be insisted upon, therefore, is this: There is no evidence of any kind that Adam, who throughout the Bible is spoken of as an authentic person, was not the first man. There is no evidence that he did not have a perfect body and fully endowed intellect; there is no evidence that he could not give appropriate names to the animals brought before him; there is no evidence that his son Cain did not build a city; there is no evidence that his grandson Jubal did not handle the harp and organ, and there is no evidence that Jubal's brother, Tubal-Cain and grandson of Adam, was not a worker in brass and iron.

"But there is no need of stating these matters in negative terms, for all discoveries in the last twenty-five years or more are in harmony with the Bible record that the first beings on earth that wore the human form had a body just as perfect, and a brain or an intellect just as capable of working, and a language just as complete in expressing thought, as those of any man now living. These are not philosophical nor theological speculations, but conclusions based upon established facts and reached by approved scientific methods."

### FORECASTING THE FINANCIAL FUTURE

At the last session of the Pennsylvania Bankers' Association, one of their number addressing the body expressed himself as convinced that prosperity may be expected, and said in conclusion:—

"A friend of mine has it [the financial fluctuations] all figured out on the cycle plan—he starts with the panic of 1819. I will not burden you with it all, but merely state that, according to his figuring, we will have good times from now until 1908, when prices will have reached their height and start downward until 1911, when we will have the greatest panic in our history. I quote him as follows:

"In the past, stocks have gone up and down with the regularity of the ebb flow of the tide. Some stocks, even with the tide going out, dart higher than others, and tend to confuse the would-be buyer as to the general tendency. So with the incoming tide, some stocks tend to keep back, though the general tendency is higher, always higher."

We have seen the financial cycles outlined, and consider it remarkable. We mention it as an outside corroboration of

about what we are expecting inferentially from the prophetic testimony, viz., that October, 1914, will date the cataclysm of anarchy in a world-wide sweep, which implies that a panic, the greatest ever known, would occur somewhere about 1911 and lead up to the "time of trouble, such as was not since there was a nation."

### A BRIEF STATEMENT OF ROME'S TEACHINGS

The latest statement we have seen of the teachings of Roman Catholicism respecting Purgatory, Indulgences, etc., is the following:—

"A *plenary indulgence* is granted to the penitent sinner upon confession and going to holy communion. It is granted to lay Catholics who take part in the Congress, go to confession, receive communion, and on any day during the Congress visit a church, praying before the blessed sacrament for the intentions of the Pope.

"A *partial indulgence* of seven years and seven quarantines—that is, the reduction of seven years and seven times for sin committed here—is granted to those of the church in the city and ecclesiastical province of New York who will unite themselves with the Congress in spirit and be interested in its proceedings, and visit a church on any day during the Congress, praying before the blessed sacrament according to the intentions mentioned above.

"A *partial indulgence* of 300 days' remission from punishment for sins in eternity is granted to those who assist at the Congress, as well as to all the faithful in the province who at least are contrite of heart and visit a church on any day of the Congress and pray. All these remissions of punishment for sin may be gained for the benefit of any friend or relative suffering punishment in purgatory. The duration of the suffering of the latter is thereby lessened and their advent into heaven expedited.

"None of these remissions from punishment in eternity can be obtained for unconfessed sin.

"The church makes a distinction between the forgiveness of sin and its punishment.

"Confession and communion bring forgiveness, but sins must sometimes be atoned for in eternity, even after sacramental absolution, the remission of this punishment being valid in the court of conscience and before God, and being made by an application of the treasure of the Church on the part of a lawful superior."

### ALL GO TO PURGATORY

Purgatory is a middle state between heaven and hell. Few if any, are so perfect at death as to deserve immediate admission to a state of bliss in heaven, and the church has taught from the beginning that souls which are not pure enough for heaven nor evil enough for hell are made to suffer for a time in purgatory.

"The pains of purgatorial punishment may be as awful as those of hell, but with this difference, that the torments of the one are everlasting while the purgatorial sufferings endure only for a limited time.

"Now, as Christ in making St. Peter the head of his church gave him the keys of heaven and of hell, the Popes, Peter's successors, have the power to absolve from sin, and consequently from much of the purgatorial punishment. And it is this that is meant by indulgences. But it does not by any means, imply that the Pope has the power or authority to remit the punishments of hell."

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Poor creatures What a miserable prospect they look forward to when they think of death coming upon their friends or themselves. No wonder the majority of the laity have such unhappy faces. How relieved they will be when, in the resurrection morning, they awake and find that their fears were a nightmare of Satan's origination to keep them from knowing and loving the true God, whose name is Love, and whose merciful provision is that all redeemed by the precious blood of Christ shall yet come to a clear knowledge of his grace and to an opportunity for restitution to all that was lost—including lasting life in divine favor.

It may sound strange at first, but it is true, that Protestants have been blessed in some respects by adding to this error—by making the future yet more awful—by determining and teaching that there is no purgatory, no prospect of peace or joy, but only agony for all eternity, for all not fit for heaven when they die.

How is this more horrible doctrine less injurious, do you ask? Because it is so unreasonable that few believe it. Protestants

well know that only saints are "fit for the kingdom" (Luke 9:62) and it is to their credit as rational beings that they cannot imagine their unfit loved ones as having been consigned by a just God to everlasting tortures.

#### A STRANGE PREDICTION

The following item is going the rounds of the secular press:—

"In 1849, according to the German newspapers, Frederick William, who was then King of Prussia, consulted a fortune teller and here is the extraordinary prediction which she made to him:—

"We are now in the year 1849," she said, "and if, beginning at the right, you place under each other in a vertical column the numerals which make up this number, 1849, under the number itself, you will find the year in which your kingdom will become a great empire. That year will be 1871. Now perform the same operation with 1871 and you will arrive at 1888, which

is the date of the first Emperor's death. Finally treat 1888 in the same manner and you will obtain 1913, this being the year in which the empire will be overthrown and a republic proclaimed."

"Here is the way in which she obtained the three notable years:—

1849	1871	1888
1	1	1
8	8	8
4	7	8
9	1	8
1871	1888	1913

"Her predictions as regards two of the years have come true and superstitious persons are now wondering if 1913 will really prove quite as fatal a year for the German Empire as she has prophesied."

## THE SATISFACTION OF JUSTICE

Last year we answered questions on the above subject sent in by one of the number. We have been requested to present our reply in the columns of the WATCH TOWER, that others might be profited as well. We do so as follows:—

With the first and second paragraphs of your letter I agree quite well. The first point of objection is found in the third paragraph.

(1) Your statement reads, "Now to purchase for Adam a right of release, it would be necessary for some one to pay to Justice the exact equivalent of what he forfeited, give a ransom for him." I agree to that part, but disagree to the next statement, namely, "This Jesus did." Jesus died for all, he laid down his life as a ransom for all, but he did not give it or pay it over to Justice for all. He deposited the merit or value of it all in the hands of Justice as security or guarantee for the redemption of the whole world, but he applied only a portion, not for the world, but solely for those who would now exercise faith in him. It is as though a man conducting a large enterprise went to a banking company and, after securing the said bank against loss, got it to underwrite his scheme, and in connection therewith appropriate a certain amount of his deposit, leaving the remainder to be paid in later on, according to terms and conditions mutually agreed upon.

That this is the divine plan is shown in various ways in the Scriptures:

(a) We are distinctly told that our Lord Jesus ascended up on high, there to "appear in the presence of God for us"—not for the world in general, but for believers. The Scriptures in various ways indicate a marked distinction between the divine arrangement for us and the divine arrangement for the world. For instance, "Christ was a propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." This statement shows a distinct differentiation between our sins and the sins of the whole world. The one sacrifice is the basis of both these propitiations, yet they are separate and distinct in order—in time. The application of the Lord's grace is first to the church, to believers, to the household of faith. He appears before the bar of Justice during this Gospel age to make satisfaction "for us."

(b) Not only have we those statements to the effect that the atonement is effected thus far only for "the household of faith," but additionally we have the demonstration of this in the fact that the holy Spirit was shed forth only upon the church, "the servants and hand-maidens." The same is attested by the statement of the Apostle that we believers "have escaped the condemnation that is on the world." The condemnation is still on the world, but it is not on us, because our High Priest has applied the merit of his sacrifice "on our behalf." Thus also the Apostle again states, "Ye are washed, ye are sanctified." Likewise he declares that the children of believers are similarly washed and cleansed, justified, and that the children of unbelievers are still "unclean."—1 Cor. 7:14.

If the atonement had been made, applied on behalf of the world, the world would no longer be unclean, children of wrath under condemnation, etc. Because the atonement was made for the household of the priest, therefore all the members of the household of faith are justified, cleansed, washed in the precious blood.

(c) It is in full accord with the foregoing that we find the Apostle distinctly declaring that it is the privilege of the church to "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ"—to "suffer with him," to "be dead with him," etc. Thus the teachings of the New Testament agree with those of the prophets of the Old Testament, who "spoke of the sufferings of

Christ and the glory that should follow." The glory has not yet been revealed. When "revealed all flesh shall see it together." We are glad to trust that we are in the dawning of the Millennial day, that the glories of the great Messiah will soon be manifested to the groaning creation. This will be a manifestation of the Son of God, and also of all the sons of God graciously counted in with him as suffering with him, sacrificing with him, dead with him as members of his body, participants in his sufferings and sacrifice, sharers with him in his glory to be revealed.

(d) In accordance with the foregoing is the testimony of the Tabernacle Shadows which fits and binds together every feature of the glorious plan and shows us that the first sacrifice of the Day of Atonement, the sacrifice of the bullock, was for and on behalf of the body of the priest and his household, the house of Levi, the household of faith. It shows us that the sacrifice of the goat, representing the sacrifice of the body of Christ, is a part of the atonement work, though the merit rests entirely upon the first sacrifice—of the bullock. From this we see how the Lord is accepting "us" as sacrificers, because we are Christ's and not on our own account.

(e) We see further that this second part of the Atonement Day sacrifices will not be complete until the last member of the body of Christ has suffered with the Head. The type shows further that when this shall have been accomplished, the full ransom-price for the world will be presented to Justice and be accepted forthwith; and that as a result the great High Priest shall come forth clothed in glory and in blessing power and that the result will be the lifting of the curse, the removal of all divine wrath and the pouring of the holy Spirit upon "all flesh."

(f) This in no sense signifies that merit of the church has accomplished anything that could not have been accomplished without co-operation. It shows on the contrary, that all the merit was in the Lord Jesus and in the sacrifice which he gave. Any sacrifice which we make is based upon his merit imputed to us and continued in our sacrifice. It is the sacrifice of "his body," in the larger sense of the word his church, that will thus be completed. It will be the Christ, the great Prophet, Priest and King, of many members, with one Head, raised up from amongst the brethren. It will effect all this great blessing, and all the members of the body must recognize the honor of the head and maintain the same; and all of them will be glad to acknowledge that without him we could do nothing, and that without him our sacrifices would not avail anything, and that hence to him belongs all the glory of the great salvation.

(1) I still affirm, as in the past, that as we all shared in Adam's condemnation, any price which will avail for him must be sufficient to purchase deliverance for all that were in him—the whole human race: that the death penalty was such that if one were paid for, all would be paid for: that in harmony with this Jesus gave himself a ransom for all. But giving of himself into death as "a ransom for all" or "a corresponding price," must not be confounded with the paying over of that price to Justice after our Lord arose from the dead. He has the entire merit of his sacrifice at his command, and all of it pledged on behalf of Adam and his race, but only a portion of it is applied, namely, to the household of faith.

#### JESUS APPROPRIATED ON BEHALF OF BELIEVERS

(2) To say that the Lord paid over to the Father or to Justice the full amount, and that the Father accepted the same for all, would be to contradict the plain statements of Scripture which we have just examined. Justice is properly represented as being blind, and hence if the Lord's merit had been applied

for all Justice would not be at liberty to discriminate and to select first of all a little flock and withhold for a time the blessing of the remainder. Justice must be impartial, and if she accepts the price must at once release all claim upon the captives. We have shown that this is not the case, that Justice still regards the world as "children of wrath," under condemnation, "unclean." This proposition is, therefore, fallacious—manifestly so.

(3) When our Lord, "ascended up on high" he led a multitude of captives. In the prophetic sense we might speak of the whole world as already released, but not in the actual sense. From the standpoint that our Lord's life is a sufficiency to meet all the requirements of Justice whenever applied, we may think and speak of the world as being no longer dead but merely asleep. Indeed our heavenly Father spoke of mankind from that standpoint of his purpose centuries before the ransom price was paid at all.

The entire work of redemption is properly viewed as one with a beginning and ending, just like the Day of Atonement. It was all one Day of Atonement, but there were two parts of the work of that day. And so there are various features or stages of the work of "leading captivity captive." It began with our Lord's own personal release from the captivity of death; it continued subsequently with the reckoned release of believers, and further development is found in their actual release in the first resurrection. A still further development will be found in the awakening of the world and the restitution processes of the Millennial age. The absolute fulfilling of this leading of captivity captive will not be realized until the close of the Millennial age, when death will be literally, actually, fully "swallowed up in victory."

#### OUR LORD'S SACRIFICE WAS SUFFICIENT

(4) There was no need of anything being added to the Lord's sacrifice so far as Justice was concerned; but the Apostle tells us that God foreknew us also by Jesus—that, in the divine plan formulated before the world began, the Lord foreordained the church, Jesus' bride or associates; and in order for us to share with him in his glory it was necessary that we should also share with him in his sufferings. And because his sufferings were by divine arrangement applied as the atonement for the sins of the church, therefore, by this divine arrangement, any sufferings that the church may experience are counted in with those of the Lord as "sufferings of Christ;" and all the sufferings of Christ were atonement sufferings, not for personal sins, but for the sins of the world.

If any of the Lord's people suffer stripes as punishments for partially wilful sins, such sufferings are not part of the sufferings of Christ, but are stripes for discipline. The sufferings which we have with Christ are of the same nature as his, namely, because of our loyalty to him and the principles of righteousness for which he stands.

#### JUSTICE DEALS ONLY WITH THE MEDIATOR

(5) It would not be the correct thought to say that the life of Adam forfeited through sin is to be given back to him by Justice, because Jesus redeemed us. The thought rather is that Adam and his race had forfeited their rights to life and had no such rights at the bar of Justice, and that Jesus sacrificed his human life on man's behalf, so that the dead world might receive life *through him*—life from the dead.

It is in harmony with this thought and in opposition to the other that the Lord speaks of himself as the Bread which came down from heaven, of which a man might eat and not die. Thus in the celebration of the Lord's Memorial Supper, in partaking of the bread we represent our faith in his redemptive work and our justification to life through the life which he laid down for us.

The same thought is also presented in the Scriptures when referring to Christ as the "everlasting Father" of the world in the future. He sacrificed his life, and is by divine authority granted the privilege of applying its equivalent to Adam and all of his race as he may please. He does apply a portion of that merit now to us who believe, and eventually he will apply sufficient of his merit to bring a blessing to all the world of mankind. Hence we have the promise of the Scriptures of a future time of restitution: the restitution to life of Adam and his children by virtue of their acceptance of that life as a gift—which Christ secured for them by the laying down of his life on their behalf. This our Lord designates regeneration. The world was generated once through Adam and all lost life through his disobedience. Christ has died that he might assume the place and rights and privileges of headship to our race, the privilege of fatherhood. He proposes a regeneration of all the children of Adam—so many of them as will accept the terms and conditions for returning to the full life and perfection of perfect human nature.

#### MIGHT NOT THE CHURCH BE MERELY "RECKONED SACRIFICERS?"

(6) The "reckoning" of Scripture is merely that of justification, making up for our inherited deficiencies and weaknesses. There is no reckoning of sacrifice. Being blemished by nature we have nothing whatever to sacrifice unless first we are counted or reckoned as justified,—made whole, cleansed. Such the Apostle urges, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God [in your justification] that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, your reasonable service." The sacrifice must be an actual one of a body reckoned perfect, but actually very imperfect. We cannot be reckoned to suffer with Christ if we do not suffer with him, and hence there is nothing in the Scriptures to this effect. On the contrary, "If we [actually] suffer with him, we shall also be glorified together." It will not do, therefore, to figure away these plain limitations of the Scriptures. Whoever does so is in a dangerous position, wresting with the Scriptures.

On the Atonement Day the blood of the bullock was sprinkled seven times, as representing fulness, completeness, efficacy—efficacy for the thing for which it was sprinkled or applied, namely, on behalf of the High Priest's body and household. Similarly, subsequently, the blood of the Lord's goat, the second offering of the Atonement Day, was sprinkled seven times, representing similarly perfection, fulness, completeness, efficacy, for the purpose it was applied, namely, on behalf of "all the people."

#### PERHAPS JESUS DIVIDES THE CREDIT WITH HIS CHURCH

(8) It is wholly contrary to the facts and Scripture to say that Jesus divided the *credit* of the atonement sacrifice with his church but not the deed. It is the deed that he requires, and without the deed there will be no participation. It is not the less his deed, as already shown. We could have neither part nor lot in the matter except as members of his body and under the influence of him as our head, who works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure—to fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ.

(9) Yes, we use balances to represent divine Justice. Adam's disobedience forfeited his life to satisfy Justice; the unmerited death of Christ would balance or offset Adam's penalty, and when applied will give him the right to regenerate Adam's race on appropriate terms and conditions.

(10) To say that "The church sacrifices her life-rights to becomes sharer in the great reward of Christ," yet to reject the clear testimony that God accepts this as a part of the sufferings of Christ, guided by him as the head, and finally to be applied by him as a part of his own, is inconsistent and unreasonable.

## THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

JOHN 7:37-46.—MARCH 5.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"Never man spake like this man."

The two great feasts of the Jews were the Feast of Passover, from the fifteenth to the twenty-second of the first month, and the Feast of Tabernacles (dwelling in booths), from the fifteenth to the twenty-second of Tishri, the seventh month, corresponding closely to October 1, but varying according to the Jewish calendar, which was calculated on lunar time. These two great feasts divided the Jewish year, and were the great occasions on which the people from all over the kingdom were expected to visit Jerusalem, the capital city, to spend a week in fellowship together, in thanksgiving to the Lord and the making of vows to him. These two festivals represent the beginning of a year—the one the civil year, the other the church year, yet both might be termed religious in the sense that the

entire national government was built upon a religious foundation. Israel was God's nation, and its laws were from him.

Each of these feasts had its peculiar religious sacrifice, pointing to our Lord and his sacrifice and the Gospel church. his body. The Passover festival in the beginning of the year was the anniversary of the deliverance from Egypt, the Passover lamb representing Christ, our Passover sacrifice, and the feast following representing the liberty and joy and blessing which come to all of the Lord's people passed over through faith in his blood. The fall festival was held in connection with the Day of Atonement and its sacrifices for sins, which typified the better sacrifices of this Gospel age and the ultimate atonement for the sins of the whole world, and the consequent

ultimate removal of the curse which still rests upon the world of mankind. This festival was instituted at the time Israel passed from the wilderness into the land of promise. It commemorated the wilderness life and the entrance into Canaan, where they were privileged to enjoy their inheritance and have more substantial dwelling places. It was really the festival of the New Year, and a kind of thanksgiving occasion for the ingathering or harvest of the year—Exod. 23:16; Lev. 23:33-44.

#### THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES CELEBRATION

The usage of the people on this occasion is thus described by Edersheim and others:—

"In Jerusalem booths were erected everywhere, in court and on housetop, in street and in square. These arbors or booths were made of branches of trees—palms, sycamores, olives, pines, willows, etc. Nobody was living at home, everybody in these booths—all the people from the city and crowds from the country. All distinctions of rank, all separation between rich and poor, were for a while forgotten, as each one dwelt in as good a dwelling as his neighbor.

"Each morning a joyous procession, with music, went down to the Pool of Siloam and drew water in a golden pitcher, from which it was poured out upon the altar amid hallelujahs.

"At night four golden candelabra, each with four golden bowls for light, were in the center of the court, and the light emanating from them was visible to the whole city. Around these lights pious men danced before the people with lighted flambeaux in their hands, singing hymns and songs of praise, whilst the Levites, who were stationed on the fifteen steps which led into the woman's court of the Temple and which corresponded to the fifteen psalms of degrees, i. e., steps (Psalms 122-134), accompanied the songs with instrumental music.

"The Temple illumination was symbolical of the light which was to shine from out the Temple into the dark night of heathendom; then, at the first dawn of morn the blasts of the priests' silver trumpets, of the army of God, as it advanced with festive trumpet-sound and call, to awaken the sleepers and to utter solemn protest against heathendom."

"It is supposed that on the last evening of the festival, when the splendid light of this grand illumination was to cease, Christ called attention to himself, 'I am the Light of the world' (John 8:12), which is to shine forever and illuminate not only the Temple and the holy City, but all the world,"—the Sun of Righteousness.

#### "THAT GREAT DAY OF THE FEAST"

The last of these seven days of the feast was called the great day. It was in it that the entire festival ceremony and rejoicing reached its climax. Again we glean from Edersheim and others, as follows:—

"According to Jewish tradition the pillar of cloud by day and the fire by night, symbolical of God's presence and guidance, at first appeared to Israel on the fifteenth of Tishri, the first day of the feast. On that day Moses was said to have come down from the Mount and announced to the people that the tabernacle of God was to be reared among them. We note that the dedication of Solomon's Temple and the descent of the Shekinah glory upon it took place at this feast.—1 Kings 8; 2 Chron. 7.

"The last great day of the feast was the climax of all this symbolization. Early in the morning the people, with the Paradise apple (an orange) in their left hands and branches in their right, marched to the sound of music in a procession headed by the priest, who bore a golden pitcher to draw water from the Pool of Siloam, south of the Temple. The priest having filled the golden pitcher at this fountain, brought it back into the court of the Temple, amid the shouts of the multitude and the sound of cymbals and trumpets. The return was so timed that the procession should arrive just as other priests were laying the pieces of the sacrifices on the altar of burnt offering toward the close of the ordinary sacrifice-service.

"On each of the seven days the priest made a circuit of the altar, saying, 'As, then, now work salvation, Jah! O Jah, give prosperity!' But on the seventh day they made the circuit seven times remembering how the walls of Jericho had fallen in similar circumstances, and anticipating that by the direct interposition of God, the walls of heathendom would fall before Jehovah and the world lie open before his people to go in and possess it.

"The golden pitcher full of water was then poured upon the altar. The ceremony was considered of vital importance and apparently symbolized the out-pouring of the holy Spirit. Immediately following the pouring of this water the Hallel was sung. This consists of Psalms 113-118. These were chanted, with responses, to the accompaniment of the flute. As the Levites intoned the first line of the Psalm, the people repeated it; while to each of the other lines they responded,

Hallelu Yah (Praise ye the Lord). Then the priests blew a three-fold blast on their silver trumpets."

#### JESUS AT THE FEAST

Our lesson relates to the last feast of Tabernacles attended by our Lord—the one which occurred just six months before the crucifixion. In a previous lesson we saw that the feeding of the five thousand was at a time when many of them were on their way to Jerusalem to the feast of the Passover, so that the present lesson is at least six months later—quite possibly a year and six months later, as evidently there was a considerable time during which our Lord "could not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him."

On the occasion of this feast, many wondered whether or not Jesus would attend it, for it seems to have been well understood by a considerable number that the chief priests were so envious against the Lord, so enmitous, so bitter, that threats had been made against his life. While our Lord realized that his life was under divine protection until his "hour" should come, nevertheless it would appear that he did not tempt providence by going unnecessarily in the way of danger, but rather shaped his course according to the conditions he found. Thus, too, he admonished his disciples, "When they persecute you in one city, flee ye to another."

The context shows that at this time some of our Lord's brethren (probably his cousins, for cousins at that time were called "brethren") seemed to doubt his Messiahship, and urged him to go up to Jerusalem and perform his mighty works there, where the most learned men of the nation would have an opportunity for seeing and criticising and fault-finding, and if possible refuting his claims and miracles. Our Lord's answer was, "Go ye up to the feast; I go not up to the feast; mine hour is not yet fully come." For our Lord to have gone up early to the feast might have provoked the animosity of the religious teachers the more. His delay in going was no injury to the publicity of his teachings either, because the people naturally inquired for him, expressed wonder, discussed his claims, told one another what they had seen and heard in their own cities, villages, etc. It was toward the latter part of the feast week that our Lord arrived on the scene and went straightway to the Temple, and when the religious sentiments of the people were at their highest pitch he called their attention to the deep spiritual things symbolized by them year by year continually.

It is presumed that it was just at the close of the pouring of the golden pitcher full of water on the altar, a libation to the Lord, and while the multitude in the warm climate were probably thirsty and had their thirst rather aggravated by the sight of the water, that Jesus made the announcements which constitute the essence of our lesson. "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture saith, Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

No wonder the people said, as the Prophet had foretold, that our Lord spake in parables and dark sayings. How many, how few of the multitude who heard could gain any reasonable understanding of this message! Even under the blessed influences that are ours under the spirit dispensation, how few have any adequate conception of what these words signify.

#### DRINKING AT THE FOUNTAIN

All have some conception of what natural thirst is, and of the refreshment that comes through partaking of literal water, and to understand our Lord's words respecting the water of life which he has to give, we must carry the figure forward and realize that there are other thirsts and cravings of the human nature which need satisfaction, which without satisfaction cause unrest, distress. These cravings of the heart we briefly refer to again as thirst for rest, peace, joy and fellowship. Only those who have such thirsts are called upon—"Blessed are they that hunger and thirst." Many of our race at the present time are so depraved mentally and physically that they have no hunger and thirst for better things than they now enjoy—they already are full and satisfied with the imperfect things possessed. The Lord's appeal at the present time is not to these, but to those who hunger and thirst, "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink."

This is the appeal of this Gospel age: the Lord is seeking for the thirsting ones and finding them, and if they will drink at his fountain of grace and truth, they will find the satisfaction, the comfort, the joy, the peace, the rest, the blessing, which the world can neither give nor take away. Blessed, therefore, are the thirsty, and favored are they who are now drinking of the waters given forth by the smitten Rock—our Lord.—1. Cor. 10:4.

The Apostle commented upon our Lord's words, explaining the first part, but not the second. He says, "This spake he of the spirit which they who believed on him should receive." The

receiving of the spirit is the satisfying of our thirst. All through life we are drinking at this fountain. We will not be satisfied until we awake in the Lord's likeness; then, as the Apostle declares, "I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness"—when this mortal shall be swallowed up in immortality, we shall be like our dear Redeemer, see him as he is, and share his glory as members of his body.

#### THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS NOT YET GIVEN

The holy Spirit was exercised upon the prophets, and under its influence they spake and wrote. But the holy Spirit granted to the Gospel church at and since Pentecost is different; it is the spirit of adoption, the spirit of understanding, not the spirit of prophecy. It was not possible for any to be begotten of the spirit and sons of God until the ransom-sacrifice of Jesus as on our behalf had been accomplished, not until he had ascended up on high and presented the merit of that sacrifice on our behalf to the Father, not until it had been accepted by the Father. Then this blessing of the spirit of adoption was shed forth upon the apostles. All accepted to membership in the body of Christ since by association with the fellow-members, are made partakers of this one spirit, by which all are sealed until the day of deliverance. Eph. 4:30.

#### THE OUTFLOWING STREAM

"Out of his body shall flow a stream of living waters." This verse was not fulfilled at Pentecost, where the Lord's followers merely began to drink of the spiritual truths, and by them to be united into one body of many members, of which Jesus is the head. It is from this one body that ultimately the stream of the water of life shall flow during the Millennial age for the blessing of the whole world. Our Lord referred to this saying, "My word shall judge you in the last day"—in the great day, the Millennial day; the world shall be judged by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. The water of life represents the truth, and the amount of this water of life or truth that shall proceed from the mouth of the Lord, from the mouth of the glorified church, shall be such a stream, such a flow, as will reach to every part of the earth. "The knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth."

In the present time, those who drink at the fountain of the water of life, are merely the sanctified in Christ Jesus, and our Lord declares of these that his grace and truth in them shall be as a well of water springing up into life everlasting. In Revelation, Chapter xxi, we are given the picture of the aggregation of the various members of the body of Christ in glory. The whole is pictured as the New Jerusalem, and from it issues the stream of the water of life which our Lord referred to in his discourses. It will be a great river of the water of life, and on either bank of it will be the trees of life, nourished and supplied by it, bearing good fruit, and the leaves of those trees will be for the healing of the nations.

Thus seen the Lord's discourse briefly pictured the blessings coming to his followers during this Gospel age, and the blessings that shall in the next age proceed from them for the comfort, blessing and uplifting, restitution, of all the families of the earth—of whosoever wills to take of that river of the water of life, which then will flow freely, and to which all will be clearly and distinctly invited by the Spirit and the Bride.

#### A DIVISION AMONGST THE PEOPLE

Peace and unity are greatly to be desired; yet these are not always possible, not always advantageous. If all were perfect, peace and unity would certainly be the only proper condition, but so long as there are imperfections, errors, etc., there must be differences. In harmony with this our Lord declared that his message would not bring peace but a sword under present conditions. He will be the Prince of Peace by and by, but not until peace shall be established upon a righteous basis. Before that time he will be the King who will reign in righteousness, and dash evil systems and things to pieces as potters' vessels, with a rod of iron.

There are those who say Peace, Peace, when there is no peace and when peace is not possible, and the Lord's people are not to be of these. This does not mean that the Lord's people are to be breeders of strife. On the contrary they are exhorted everywhere in the Scriptures to be peaceable and peacemakers; but with all efforts for peace, and their love of peace and their peacemaking qualities continually increasing, the message that our Lord gave them will breed disturbances. Why? We answer in the words of our Lord, Because there is no fellowship between light and darkness, there can be no peace nor truce between the two: in proportion as the one obtains control, the other is excluded.

In harmony with this we find in this lesson that there was a division among the people because of him—some approving and some opposing. Thus it must be with us as we lift up the

standard of righteousness: if we will let the light of truth shine out, those who love the truth will be more or less attracted by it in proportion as their hearts are sincere, truth loving. Those who love the error will become antagonistic in proportion to their lack of sincerity. If this was the case with our Lord, can we think that it would be possible for his disciples to find it otherwise? Surely not. We must have our feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. Ours is the Gospel of peace, yet we will find that as we bear it to others our path of progress will be a difficult one and we will need all the protection the Lord has provided in his fore-statement of what we must expect, and his promises of blessing and glory to the overcomers.

#### ENVY, MALICE, HATRED, MURDER

While our Lord was in the Temple teaching, the Jewish rulers, aware of his presence, were conspiring for his life. A meeting of the Sanhedrin was called, and officers representing the body were present in the Temple amongst the people, charged with the responsibility of finding some fault with the teaching and making it the pretext for a measure of insurrection, and further, the arrest of our Lord—under a charge either of teaching contrary to the Law of Moses or contrary to the Roman laws. On every occasion they sought to entrap him in his words, but being unable to do so, they returned to the Sanhedrin to report.

What a sad commentary it is upon the deceitfulness of the human heart, that these men, who were thus seeking for the apprehension and death of Jesus, were the most influential men in this, the holiest nation of earth. Not only so, they were Doctors of the Law—men supposedly the best versed in the Mosaic Law, its letter and spirit—men whose position in Judaism corresponded to that of Doctors of Divinity in Christendom today. We may well ask, as Pilate subsequently did, "Why, what evil hath he done?" The answer must be that there was no evil except in the hearts of these most talented, educated and nominally most religious men in the world.

We can imagine that if one were to have inquired as to their motive, the answer would have been, We are so loyal to God, to his Law through Moses and to the interests of this mighty people, over which God has made us rulers and teachers, that we are zealous to put down this man who, though he seems to be God-fearing, sympathetic with the poor, etc., is, we believe, a most pernicious man. He is pernicious in that he is representing himself to be the Messiah, and because he is really a man of ability, he has hoodwinked the people. If we let him alone, the power of controlling this nation, which now rests with us as the moral and intellectual leaders of the nation, will pass out of our grasp; this man will establish himself, and the whole people of Israel will look upon us as being foolish, and conclude that they were able to know the Messiah and that we, their intellectual superiors, were stupid or out of divine favor so we could not recognize the time of our visitation.

This would be their way of reasoning on the subject, but the Lord's view of the situation would be the very reverse, that they were hypocritical, that they were pretending to be what they were not in reality, that much of their praise and service toward the Lord were formalistic lip services, and that pride lay at the bottom of their endeavors and professions, and that this pride was touched by the success of our Lord and his wisdom, and the fact that the multitudes heeded his message: they were envious, malice burned in their hearts, they hated him without a cause—simply because he was better, holier, wiser than they, and because the people were recognizing this fact.

How dangerous a thing is envy—selfishness! How many of the Lord's people today are afflicted by it so that they refuse to recognize the spirit of the Lord, so that instead of seeking to encourage one another and to add to the influence of one another and to realize that the whole work of the Lord is one, alas, how often is the spirit of strife and vain glory found! How displeasing everything of this kind must be in the sight of the Lord!

#### GRACE WAS POURED UPON HIS LIPS

When the officers returned to the Sanhedrin, the question was asked, Where is your prisoner? Why did you not bring him? Were you not able to entrap him in his words? Is it possible that any man could speak in public and that keen-minded men such as you are would be unable to entrap him in anything he might say that would enable you to form a charge against him as a teacher of that which would be injurious to the people, that he said nothing that you could construe to be a violation of the Law of Moses or the law of the Romans? The answer was a volume in itself—"Never man spake like this man."



The Lord's people, seeking to walk in his footsteps, continually find that the world is still full of envy and malice and hatred. They still find it true that "The world knoweth us not, even as it knew him not;" they still find that amongst their opponents, amongst those who seek to do them injury, amongst those who seek to entrap them in their words and who would apprehend them and injure them in reputation, if not in person, they find some of the worldly noble, the worldly wise, the worldly religious. The Lord's message to these is, "In your patience possess ye your souls." Their proper course is to set a guard upon their lips that they sin not with their mouths, that they should not only pray but strive that the meditations of their hearts and words of their mouths be acceptable to the Lord, and in proportion as this is true of them

it will also be true of them that they will be wiser and more discreet in their language than others—approximately like unto him who spake as never man spake.

But what a matter this is to guard the tongue! Truly the Apostle said that he who is able to conquer his tongue is able to conquer his whole body. It is so easy to say something that ought not to be said, it is so easy for the majority to repeat an evil rumor, to cast a reflection upon the character of another, to assassinate in this manner, or at least to wound or injure, the interests or feelings or good name of another. Let us more and more in this particular also seek to be like our Lord, seek to speak as other men do not speak, and thus show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

## "YE SHALL BE FREE INDEED"

JOHN 8:31-40.—MARCH 12.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin."

This lesson is a brief report of one our Lord's discourses while at the Feast of Tabernacles, referred to in our last lesson—probably delivered on the last, the great day of the Feast. Many who had heard his discourse on the Water of Life that he could give and on himself as the Light of the World, were well convinced that "never man spake like this man"—convinced that he was a great prophet, or teacher at least, that he was sent of God, and, this being true, that he could be none other than the long-expected Messiah. Addressing these believers, our Lord intimated to them that they were not yet fully his disciples—that discipleship would imply a desire to hear his message further and a willingness to obey it at any cost. His words were: "If ye continue in my words, then ye are my disciples indeed: and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

### SHARPER THAN A TWO-EDGED SWORD

The Apostle points out the fact that the Word of God is quick (living) and powerful and sharper than a two-edged sword, able to separate and divide and distinguish as nothing else will do, both the thoughts and intents of the heart. We see this illustrated in our Lord's words. He uttered the truth, important truth, blessed truth, helpful truth to those in a right condition of mind. Nevertheless, in those in a wrong condition of mind his noble words stirred up envy, resentment and an evil spirit. This must necessarily be the case always. Truth, as our Lord points out, is represented by the light, error by the darkness, and there is continually an antagonism between these. Where one is, the other is correspondingly lacking; where one comes in, the other departs proportionately.

Apparently many of our Lord's hearers were favorably impressed with these utterances; apparently the multitude of those who heard him were so much on his side that the officers of the Sanhedrin failed to take him; apparently the division of the people concerning him was quite largely in his favor. The expression, "Never man spake like this man," and the declarations that they " marvelled at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth," and that they said, "If this be not the Christ, when the Christ cometh can he do greater things than this man doeth?" all imply that there was a strong undercurrent of sentiment in his favor; and the fact that the chief priests and Doctors of the Law were jealous of him to the extent that they sought his death, also implies this attitude of the multitude. But he followed the course of duty instead of the course of worldly wisdom and self exaltation.

It was necessary that he should present the truth to those who were believing, that it might sift and separate amongst them, that those of proper attitude of heart might be brought nearer to him and to the Father, and be prepared for the great change which would date from the time of his death and resurrection and the pouring out of the holy Spirit. It was necessary, also, that others not of the right condition of heart should be repelled. "That seeing they might see and not perceive," not become disciples indeed, not be made free, because not really the children of the truth; that they should not fully recognize the Messiah, not be prepared for the blessing of Pentecost, but, on the contrary, be left in their blindness, in which six months later they would cry before Pilate, "Crucify him," "Away with such a fellow from the earth," "His blood be upon us and upon our children."

### PRIDE AN OPPONENT TO THE TRUTH

Touch a man's pride and you arouse his whole being. Blessed, therefore, and favorably conditioned are the humble, the meek and the lowly of heart. They are not only better prepared to receive the good tidings respecting the kingdom, but will be better prepared to follow the footsteps of the Master in the attainment of the kingdom. Pride is generally in error

and hence frequently comes into contact with the truth, as in this case. There was nothing really or properly offensive in our Lord's words, "The truth shall make you free:" it was the power of the truth in the words and not any rudeness or unkindness of the sentiment that aroused the wrath of the hearers—the expression wounded their pride.

This pride seems to be a part of the difficulty of the Jew from that day to this. The Apostle intimates this is his quotation from the Prophet respecting their fall. "Let their table become a snare, a recompense unto them." The peculiar blessings of God upon that people ensnared them, for instead of appreciating the fact that they were not more worthy than others, they trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others—they thought of themselves as being more worthy than others of divine favors, revelations, etc. So in this case our Lord's hearers resented the thought that the Truth could make them free. If our Lord had said, You who are free, being my disciples, shall bless the heathen and deliver them from the yoke of bondage, the sentiment would have called forth approval and he would have been well thought of.

And this, indeed, would be the strict truth—the Lord's faithful disciples, the Israelites indeed, are the channels through whom the Lord will ultimately break the shackles of sin and death from off the Gentiles, the world and also from Israel. But in order for anyone to be the Lord's disciple, he himself must be made free, and it was to this the Lord referred, and it was this thought that angered those who had a few moments before believed on him. How could they regard him as the Messiah when he spoke thus slightly of the Jewish nation and implied that in some sense of the word they were bondsmen? No; they had been bondsmen for awhile in Egypt but they now were free, was their argument.

### SIN AND DEATH, SLAVE-MASTERS

Supporting his previous statement, our Lord thrust a probe into their wounds, which had a good effect doubtless upon those in the right condition, but only an angering effect upon the majority. His words were, "He that committeth sin is the slave of sin." In agreement with our Lord's words we recall the Apostle's expression, "Ye were sold under sin"—into slavery to sin; and again he represents that the whole world are slaves to sin and death. Sin and Death are personified as cruel monarchs reigning over the world of mankind, and that the only ones freed from their galling yoke are those whom Christ has made free through the truth, those who through the truth have become his servants, his followers. What a precious lesson there is here for those who are in a humble attitude of heart and comprehend the slavery, longing for the liberty proper to the sons of God. All those learning this lesson, all those realizing the power of sin and death reigning, must desire freedom before they are properly prepared to follow Jesus, to walk in his steps and thus seek deliverance.

For over six thousand years Israel had been under the law, and all of them who were of the right condition of heart found just what the Apostle Paul expresses in Romans vii, that to will to do right was present with them but not the ability to perform; that sin had such a hold in their members in their flesh, that their best intentions were unable fully to control their words, and thoughts and deeds. In other words, all Israelites indeed must have realized that through the fall, through the weakness of their flesh, they were unavoidably the servants, the slaves of sin, and all true Israelites looking up to the perfect law of God, the law of liberty, must have desired freedom from sin and ability to obey the divine command and thus to attain the great reward promised. Those of our Lord's hearers who were Israelites indeed must have seen the matter from this standpoint, and have felt the force of our Lord's

words and have desired that the truth should make them free from the bondage of sin and death.

The majority, proud, boastful, conscience-seared, heady, high-minded, were incensed at the truth. They tauntingly repudiated the truth, declaring that as Abraham's seed they never were in bondage, thus rejecting the only avenue of escape from their slavery, their only channel for freedom, because there is "none other name given under heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved," delivered, set free from sin and death, than the name of Jesus. Our Lord promptly exposed to them the hollowness of their pretensions. Pointing to the malice, envy, hatred, murder, which filled their hearts toward him as the result of his statement of the truth, he called upon them to witness that they had little of the disposition or works of Abraham, for they were even now desiring to kill him simply because he had told them the truth, because he had told them truths which Abraham could not tell, because he was proffering them assistances which their relationship to Abraham could not secure aside from him. No wonder the Scriptures declare, "They hated him without a cause," hated him because he told them the truth—the darkness hated the light. The same is true today as respects nominal spiritual Israel. There is a boastfulness and pride which objects to the truth because it more or less condemns all and makes manifest that very few indeed are free from the control of Sin.

#### "CHILDREN OF THE LIGHT"

Although they were not mentioned and probably were few in comparison to the multitude and probably made no demonstration at the time, we doubt not that there were some in the audience who were Israelites indeed, and in whose hearts our Master's words found lodgment, bringing forth much fruitage subsequently. These were Israelites indeed in whom there was no guile, no dishonesty, neither deception of others nor deception of their own hearts. They knew themselves to be sinners, unable to come up to the standards of the Law; they realized that they were indeed as the Lord had said, slaves of sin and imperfection; they desired to follow the perfect law of God as they discerned it with the eye of their understanding; they wondered and hoped if it were possible that this great Teacher had some words of truth, some message from the Lord which would relieve them from their great burden. These were in the attitude so graphically described and pictured by the Apostle Paul in his words, O, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this dead body? My mind desires to serve the law of God, but I have in my flesh all the imperfections and weaknesses of heredity and I am unable to do as I would.

Our Lord did not go into the details to show how the truth would make free; he merely stated the proposition, realizing that it would attract those who were of right condition of heart as the magnet attracts steel. It was not time to explain the truth that would make free. First he must redeem the world—he must die for our sins, be resurrected, changed, received up into glory and present a portion of the merit of his sacrifice on our behalf. When this had been accepted of the Father, the due time would come for the truth on this subject to be understood by the proper class, the Israelites indeed, and then he would shed forth the holy spirit to guide his disciples into all truth on the subject and to give their hearts a full assurance of faith and to give their intellects full understanding of how God could be just and yet be the justifier of them that believe.

Under the enlightening and guiding influences of that Spirit, we now see what our Lord's hearers before Pentecost could not distinctly discern. We see that Israel was the house of servants and could not abide in the house of the Lord, in the place of his favor forever, but only temporarily would they occupy the place to prepare the way for and make types for the Gospel house of sons. "For Moses verily was faithful as a *servant* over all his house [of servants], but Christ as a son over his house [of sons]." Ah! now we can appreciate that the Son makes free—free indeed those who come unto the Father through him.

The truth which our Lord gives us to make us free indeed has various parts, various aspects. First, we need to realize our enslavement to sin and the hopelessness of our own efforts to extricate ourselves and obtain liberty. Some learn this lesson of truth much more quickly than do others, but it must be learned before we are ready properly to appreciate the next lesson, which is that our Lord Jesus died that he might thus cancel the power of sin upon humanity—that he might thus relieve us judicially from the divine displeasure and sentence of death, and that he might thus have the right ultimately to set free the captives of sin and death.

The third lesson to be learned is that the time for actually setting free the world, appointed in the Father's plan, is the great seventh day, the Millennium, the seventh-thousand-year

day. Then he who bought the world with his precious blood will, according to the divine plan, dissolve the curse and set in operation the various agencies and methods of the Millennial kingdom for the mental, moral and physical uplift of the world from its dead and enslaved condition—some actually in the tomb and others hastening hither—all are to be set free from the bondage of death, all are to be granted the opportunity for coming into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, liberty of freedom from sin and its dominion and liberty of freedom from death, the wages of sin.

The Apostle points out to us that the whole creation is groaning and travailing, waiting for that day and for the sons of God, under Jesus, the great Chief-captain and High-priest, to be the deliverers. The Apostle Peter points out that whosoever at that time will not avail himself of the great privileges and blessings of liberty and return to the Father's family will be destroyed in the second death.—Acts 3:23.

#### NOW ARE WE SONS OF GOD

Another lesson which the holy Spirit teaches us through the apostles and prophets respecting this liberty where with Christ makes free, is that those who can now exercise faith in him and who earnestly crave this liberty, may in a certain sense be made free from sin and death now—in this present life—while outwardly to all appearances subject to similar conditions with the world. This faith salvation is the one which is in operation during this Gospel age. Blessed are those who have the eyes of faith and ears of faith, for they may receive this liberty in advance of the world, in advance of the Millennial age, and, receiving it into good and honest hearts, may receive still further blessing.

This liberty is justification, and of its comforting and blessed effects upon the hearts of God's people, the Apostle speaks (Rom. 5:1) saying, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God." The truth gives us this peace—believing the scriptural statement that Christ died for our sins and rose for our justification, accepting him as our Redeemer from the shackles of sin and the serving of sin and reckonedly being brought from death unto life. From this standpoint we realize that we are acceptable with God, although we are still actually imperfect, we see that God accepts our best endeavors to obey his law as instead of actual obedience, and that his justice is compensated or fulfilled by the imputation to us of the righteousness of our Lord Jesus who died for our sins. The Apostle tells such that they are freed from the slavery of sin that they may come into the service of another—even Christ.

#### "ACCESS INTO THIS GRACE"

Being thus by faith released from sin, the next step proper for the believer is to realize that he cannot keep himself, that he cannot maintain his liberty for himself, and to flee the great Redeemer, who offers protection and assistance to all those who consecrate themselves fully to him—to all those who become his disciples. By justification they are free, but still in danger of being overtaken by the snares of sin and the wiles of the adversary. To be free indeed, positively free, securely free, they need to make an alliance at once with the Lord Jesus, to give their hearts fully and completely to him, to accept his will, his word, his guidance, in every matter. But in turn the Lord is particular and will not receive these upon any terms, but only upon the condition of a full surrender to his will. Ah, they say, that means then another slavery, a slavery to Christ Jesus, instead of a slavery to sin. True, the giving up of the will is the strongest kind of a bondage, and this is exactly what the scriptures represent as being the course and the proper course of those who would be similarly free from the dominion of sin and death. The Apostle declares that being made free from sin we became the servants [Greek, the bond-slaves] of righteousness and of Christ.—Romans 6:20.

We might well hesitate about getting free from one bondage and getting under subjection to another; but when we realize that to be the bondservants of Christ means to be the bondservants of that which is right and good and true, and in harmony with the Father, and that it is to the best interests of ourselves and all concerned, we rejoice thus to place ourselves unreservedly under the control of him who hath so loved us as to purchase us with his own precious blood. Surely we are safe in his hands! Those who seek to use liberty for themselves, those who boast they have a mind of their own, and will of their own, know not how dangerous is their position, and that surely they will succumb eventually to the wiles of the adversary and to the ensnarements of sin. Only those who follow the course of full consecration to the Lord are wise. There is not only rest and peace, and joy and liberty for the sons of God now, but, additionally, O wonderful thought, to these the Master has proposed that they shall be his bride, his associates in the kingdom, his joint-heirs throughout eternity!—Romans 5:1.

## SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED

### OUR LORD AS ABRAHAM'S SEED

**Question** (1). In view of the fact that our Lord Jesus is no longer a man, but highly exalted far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named, and partaker of the divine nature, is it proper for us to consider him now to be the seed of Abraham? Or should we think of him as having been the seed of Abraham merely according to the flesh?

(2) If the above question be answered affirmatively, what are we to do with the Scriptures teaching that our Lord's sacrifice of himself became the basis of his high exaltation to power and authority to bless all the families of the earth as the seed of Abraham? Is it not the seed of Abraham that is to do the blessing, and would not this seem to indicate that the glorified Christ, and not the man Christ Jesus, is the Seed meant in the Scriptures?

(3) You point out in the DAWN that Melchisedec, who had neither father nor mother in the priesthood, and the beginning and ending of whose priesthood is not recorded, was a type of the risen, glorified Christ—"a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." Would not this seem to indicate that our Lord as a man, in the flesh, as the son of Mary, was not the heir of the Abrahamic promise, and that he did not reach this position until begotten of the holy Spirit and ultimately born of the holy Spirit?

**Answer.** The Apostle Paul settles the matter respecting our Lord's relationship to Abraham according to the flesh. He declares that when Jesus left the glory with the Father, and humbled himself, he took not upon him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham. (Heb. 2:16). This evidently refers to his birth of the flesh, as the son of Mary. Another message of similar import (Rom. 1:3) declares him to have been "of the seed of David according to the flesh," and hence of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh. This, however, does not conflict with the thought that he is still the Seed of Abraham, though highly exalted and now of a totally different nature—of the divine nature.

In this connection we must remember our Lord's own statement, "I am he that was dead, and behold I am alive forever more." He who is alive is thus declared by himself to be the same who left the heavenly courts, who took the nature of men and who died on our behalf. At no time was our Lord's life forfeited. He declared, "No man taketh it from me. I lay it down of myself. I have authority to lay it down, and to receive it again." He is the same soul or being who, in response to the Father's plan laid aside his glory and became a man, the same soul or being who, as the man Christ Jesus, gave himself unto death for our sins, his sacrifice being accepted of the Father, even unto death, and the same soul or being who was restored again, only on the higher plane of being, on the spirit plane, of the divine nature.

As our Lord forfeited nothing, as he merely tendered all to the Father, and as the Father accepted the sacrifice, and returned to him all the rights and privileges on a new plane of being, he has to distribute to them the lost life and also

the lost kingdom, but he does not propose to give to men his share in the Abrahamic promise. It is to their advantage that he shall retain this title of seed of Abraham, and exercise it to the full during the Millennial age, in the interest of all, whom he purchased with his precious blood, and whom he then will bless by setting them free from the bondage of sin and death, and give them all the needed assistances, that they may, if they will, return to full fellowship with the Father and to all that man lost in Adam, and more.

This question is not at all affected by the Melchisedec type, which merely is used by the Apostle to show how the Lord's priestly office came to him without his being a member of the priestly tribe of Levi. That type has no bearing whatever upon the covenant promise made to the seed of Abraham, except that it shows us that our Lord can be the mediatorial priest on behalf of the world during the Millennial age, without in any sense of the word being connected with the Aaronic family. As the seed of Abraham he obtains his title to the throne of earth through the typical kings of Israel, as it was written respecting the last king, Zedekiah, "O thou profane and wicked prince, whose time is come that iniquity should have an end: take off the diadem, remove the crown. This shall no more be the same. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, until he come, whose right it is, and I will give it unto him." Christ is the king, the heir of David's throne. His priestly line and authority came not through the house of Levi and Aaron, but according to another line, *viz.*, that of Melchisedec. Our Lord, as the seed of Abraham, will exercise both the kingly and priestly office in his great work mentioned in the oath-bound covenant—the blessing of all the families of the earth, during the Millennial reign.

### THE CHURCH'S RELATIONSHIP TO ABRAHAM

**Question.**—How can the Gospel church be recognized as the seed of Abraham, since only comparatively few of its members are actually members of the Jewish nation?

**Answer.**—The Apostle gives two lines of argument; the one is represented in his words, "Ye, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." (Gal. 4:28) In this argument our Lord Jesus is represented as being the actual seed of Abraham, and as granting to all those who become united to him through faith, and through the spirit of adoption a joint-heirship with him, *as members of his body*, under him as their head.

The other argument the Apostle uses is, "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3:29) Here the Apostle's thought is that of a wife who experienced the same honors and privileges as her head, her husband, by becoming vitally associated with him as his wife. Thus we Gentiles are permitted to come into relationship with this oath-bound covenant by union with Christ, and similarly the Jews, who could not claim relationship to this promise because banned by their law, are made free from their union with Moses, that they also might be united to Christ, and through union with him who is the heir of all, becomes with the Gentiles of the same class "fellow heirs of the same promise."

## ENCOURAGING WORDS FROM FAITHFUL WORKERS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

It is with greatest pleasure I write these lines and thank the Lord that there is a man who will preach the truth. I cannot tell how much good you have done me. I sent for the WATCH TOWER last spring and it would do you good to have seen me "eat it." I was starving for the Truth, and the Tower literature is the "key" that unlocks the Bible, so I can say "Blessed Book!"

I took right hold and went to work, and can say that this is the most prosperous year of my life, although the wet season destroyed all the crops and left me poorer than ever in this world's goods.

I have a son-in-law who preached for the M. E. Church, and I labored with him, and got him to come to hear one of the Pilgrims when he was in this vicinity. The result is that he resigned the pastorate and has gone to work with his hands to support his family, and preaches seven (true gospel) sermons a week, anywhere and everywhere he can get a chance. His mother heard that he had quit preaching for the denomination and she came to see him. He labored with her with the result that she accepted the Truth, and so the work goes on. Praise the Lord!

Dear Brother, I write this letter that you may feel encouraged to go on with the noble work.

Your Brother in Christ,  
WM. BONE, Michigan.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

With the last ray of light of this fast fading day, will end also the last dying spark of a once substantial bridge—the last bridge has been burned, fully consumed. In other words, I have severed my connection as an electrician with one of the largest street railway companies in the world. It was something like parting with a dear old friend, as I have been with them for fifteen years.

The reason for this action will be more clearly understood when I state that it was done for the purpose of giving my time wholly to the DAWN colporteur service, although the position was quite remunerative (my last month's salary being \$200 fair average); still the Lord offered me a better position, in fact "a hundred fold" better—Mark 10:29-30.

To be sure, my friends do not understand it, and think I am very foolish, which is quite true, viewed from their standpoint. But in harmony with our motto for the year I have asked wisdom in this matter from him who giveth liberally and upbraideth not, and I feel that I have acted on the wisdom from above. We have been called to sacrifice, and sacrifice we must, if we hope to win the crown. I sometimes think the Lord's people put too much value on money and not enough on service. I am endeavoring to correct my estimates accordingly. We can search the Scriptures through, and in no place can we find any intimation even of being told to pray for money or any other temporal thing, but on the other hand, we are told how