

To those who have never taken this step we urge a prompt acceptance, irrespective of the gracious hopes we have of a transcendent reward of glory, honor, immortality. As the Apostle declares, it is our reasonable service. Reasonable people ought to be glad of the knowledge that God is willing to accept our service, and of the opportunity to present themselves under the covering of the merit of the dear Redeemer's robe of righteousness.

To those who have already accepted the Lord's favor, who have already presented their bodies living sacrifices, who have

already given the Lord their hearts, we urge a remembrance of the fact that the sacrifice once put upon the altar must remain there, and that the longer it remains the more joyful should be the service, the more appreciated every opportunity for sacrifice, the more thankful should be the heart and the more rich should be the experience in the peace of God which passeth all understanding, ruling in our hearts and preparing us more and more through the graces of the Spirit for the glorious things which God hath in reservation for them that so love him and so reverence his Son.

VOL. XXVII

ALLEGHENY, PA., JANUARY 15, 1906

No. 2

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THREE CHURCHES UNITE IN CANADA

PRESBYTERIANS, CONGREGATIONALISTS AND METHODISTS AGREE

Toronto, Ont.—The central committee, composed of representatives from the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational churches throughout the Dominion, have agreed upon a code of doctrines that will unify the three denominations into one great church, which, it is proposed, should be known as the "United Church of Canada." The revised confession of faith of the American Presbyterian church will be used. The new Church is to be governed by the "General Conference," after the Methodist form, with a president as the chief officer. Below is to be a council, after the Congregational idea, with a chairman at the head. The next body is to be a "Presbytery," governed by a moderator. The plan will be submitted to the several denominations throughout Canada for approval, which it is expected to receive.

FOR GREAT CHURCH UNION

Concord, N. H.—A number of the Episcopal clergymen of the diocese of New Hampshire have made preliminary arrangements for the formation of an association which will have for its ultimate object the union of the Anglican Church with the Orthodox Church of Russia and other ancient churches of the East. The organization is the outgrowth of the thanksgiving service at Christ Church, Portsmouth, which followed the signing of the treaty of peace between Russia and Japan, and at which priests of the Episcopal and Russian churches officiated. The new organization will follow the lines of the "Eastern Church Association" of the Church of England and will have branches in all dioceses of the Episcopal Church in this country, if the plans of the promoters are successful. It is said that within a half a dozen years the relations between the Russian and Episcopal churches have been growing closer, but until the thanksgiving evensong held at Portsmouth, there had been no general participation in one service by both Russian and Episcopal priests.

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Items such as the above quoted in these columns are not thereby endorsed. We print them as news—as showing the fulfilment of prophecy. We could more nearly endorse the following article from the "New York Tribune":

THE INTER-CHURCH CONFERENCE

Coöperation on a far-reaching scale seems to have been the main object of the recent Inter-Church Conference on Federation of American Churches, held in New York City, and the eminent men and delegates of the conference, with hardly a single exception, predicted, as the result of Christian unity and denominational fellowship the ushering in upon the world of a reign of universal peace and righteousness, in fact, the setting up of the kingdom of God.

The writer notes that this most excellent state of affairs is to be brought about by potent forces and activities introduced in the realm of civil law, and using "the gateway of politics." No doubt those who are so enthusiastic for a vital unity agreeable to all sects, for a confederated power that shall reach to and be felt "in all Christendom," are well meaning; still, it must seem to some like only an iridescent dream; an attempt to reorganize society and introduce a "new order of things" by and through the aid of the civic power, instead of the apostolic process of the "new birth" and the operation of those powers which belong exclusively to the spiritual.

One is led to inquire whether the proposed federation of all the churches into a substantial organization that shall make itself felt in the religious, the social and the business worlds is not, after all, a church "trust." And if a church "trust" will not its methods be something after the order of the methods of the great trusts and combines of the financial

world? Will it not find a way to do away with competitors or those who do not believe in its principles and refuse to coöperate in its purposes?

Surely it would be but a step to find the heretics, and likewise find a way to punish them. And whoever ponders the history of the fourth century and studies the acts and words of the great religious councils of those early days must see in the recent congress of religionists in New York an exact parallel; and the significance of a movement that will lead, as was clearly indicated by several of the speakers, to a world religion, must not be under-estimated.

Back there, there was a coöperation and a federation on a magnificent scale. And the sure result was the ushering in of the scenes of the dark ages. It was a minority that lighted up the splendid gardens of Nero or the chariot races, their bodies soaked in petroleum, providing fuel for the lurid flames: it was a minority that underwent the tortures of the thumb-screw, the rack and the fagot, that endured the Spanish Inquisition and the exquisite punishments of a praying Torquemada rather than yield "the faith." It was the majority, the coöperative majority, that defined the civil and religious duties of man and provided punishments to fit the crime.

Shall history repeat itself? We hope not. But let this federation or combination of all churches pursue its course to the last analysis, and we tremble for the results. Let ministers of the gospel strive for forgiveness of sin and regeneration, and legislators attend strictly to the business of providing punishment for crime. And let a wide distinction ever be made between sin and crime. There will then be little likelihood of religious persecutions.

In the name of liberty to worship God "according to the dictates of one's own conscience," I want to enter a public protest against a federation or organization of churches that seeks to use the civil power to attain an end that allows only of spiritual methods, and to recommend to all the study of the life and trials of Roger Williams, the hanging of the Quakers, the whipping of the Anabaptists, the story of Daniel in the lion's den and the Hebrew worthies in the fiery furnace.

All this was accomplished by a religious federation, which is only another name for a church trust. Instead of a demand for a world religion that compels, let there be a plea for a genuine religion that implores.

JOHN S. WIGHTMAN.

THE WORLD'S PERPLEXITY

On the opposite page we copy from "Doctor" Dowie's publication a cartoon which fairly well represents the present situation of "Christendom." But should not Doctor Dowie also be represented in the crowd, shouting, "I am for myself, as 'First Apostle,' 'Elijah,' and the 'Messenger of the Covenant'?" It would seem so!

Possibly some unfriendly critic may say, "Yes; and you are another who is adding to the Babel of confusion, forming a new division, 'the sect everywhere spoken against,' the no-name sect."

Not so, we reply. It is not we but the truth which causes the division, even as our Master foretold and exemplified: "I am not come to send peace, but a sword." As *present truth* did a separating work between the wheat and the chaff in the Jewish "harvest," so now *present truth* will be used of the Lord to separate the "wheat" from the "tares" in the present "harvest" of this age.

It is true that our quiet, effective presentation of God's Word and plan does cause commotion and a great din, as all sects and parties at once shout against the faithful presentations of God's Word of "good tidings of great joy unto all people," as presented in MILLENNIAL DAWN. But that is Babylon's noise, not ours: It is their effort to obscure the

"I am of Paul" "I am of Cephas"
I am of Calvin! I am of Luther!
etc! etc! etc!

How can I know that
God sends this crowd
with a plan for my re-
demption? Why they are
not united. How do I know
which one to follow?

The Prayer of the Christ —

"Neither for these only do I pray,
but for them also that believe on
Me through their word; that
they may all be one, even as Thou
Father, art in Me and I in Thee
that they also may be in Us
that the World may believe
that Thou didst send Me."

John, 17:20, 21.



I thought my friend was
safe in that crowd, but
here comes along this Zion
that will unify all the
good people among them.
Then the prayer of the
Christ will be answered.

Champe

light of the dawning new dispensation. It is their unavailing effort to drown the voice of the great Shepherd, who is now calling his true sheep out of every earthly pen to himself and the liberties and rest and food of the true fold.

We preach not ourself but Christ. We substantiate nothing except by his Word. We make no laws, formulate no creed, deprive no sheep of his full liberty in Christ; but merely on every question quote the Word of the Lord, through the apostles and prophets. We boast nothing, claim nothing of ourself. We are content to serve the Lord and his flock to the best of our ability—exact no tithes, no "honor of men," no confession of authority, no compensation; hoping merely for the love of the Lord and of those who are his children and have his Spirit.

So far from forming or desiring to form a new sect, we ignore all sectarian systems and their claimed authority; we recognize only the "one Lord, one Faith and one Baptism" of the Bible and fellowship as a "brother" every person of decent morals who confesses faith in the "redemption through

the blood of Christ," and especially all of this class who profess a full consecration to the Lord's will and service,—whatever sect they may be in, or outside of all.

The word "Catholic" signifies general or universal. We know of Greek Catholics, Roman Catholics, Anglican Catholics, etc., but we know of no other company of Christians which recognizes every Christian in the world in the same complete sense that we do, as stated foregoing. Hence to us the term Catholic, or Universal, most fitly belongs.

Our Lord's petition for his "members"—"that they all may be one even as thou, Father, and I are one," was never meant to apply to sects and parties as is being attempted by the Federation movement now in progress. The Father and the Son are one in a very different sense from that. On the contrary, we occupy a position to which every true child of God can come if he chooses. And the best, the truest of all the sects and of those outside all sects are now being gathered to the Lord and to us, and all truly the Lord's in faith and in practice.

THE PASSOVER MEMORIAL, APRIL 8, 1906

For the benefit of our readers in foreign lands we make early announcement of the date for the celebration of the death of our Passover Lamb. Again we have the choice of two dates. All almanacs to which we have access show the date for the new moon after the spring equinox to be March 24th. If we calculate from that date, the Memorial night of the 13th of Nisan would fall on April 6th. On the other hand all the almanacs, so far as we are aware, show that the moon will not reach its full until April 9th. As we have already pointed out the moon in the Scriptures is the symbol of the Jewish nation, and the intention evidently was to represent that the full measure of Israel's opportunity and test was reached at the time of our Lord's crucifixion, and that from that time the light of that nation began to wane.

Unable to account for the discrepancy, or to see how it would require sixteen days for a new moon to reach its full we made inquiry of the Allegheny Observatory astronomers, who seemed unable to account for the matter and merely confirmed the facts as given in the almanacs. They in turn referred us to the United States Naval Observatory at Washington, D. C., from whom also we received confirmation of the almanac dates, but they could give no explanation of the peculiarity of the discrepancy—why on this occasion it requires sixteen days for the moon to reach its full, while ordinarily it requires fourteen days.

U. S. Naval Observatory,
Washington, D. C.

MR. C. T. RUSSELL,

SIR,—I am in receipt of your communication of the 31st ult. in which you state that you find in some 1906 almanacs the statement made that a new moon appears March 24, 6.25 p. m., and that it fulls April 9, 1.12 a. m., and also that it occurs to you that there must be some discrepancy in this, as the time would amount to 15 days and six hours.

In reply I beg to advise you that the data given above are correct, the time being given in eastern standard time. By reason of the great eccentricity of the moon's orbit it not infrequently occurs that the time between the two above-mentioned lunations exceeds 15 days.

Very respectfully,

WALTER S. HARSHMAN,

Professor of Mathematics, U.S.N., Director Nautical Almanac.

Although we went to so much particularity to ascertain exactly the proper date for the celebration of the Memorial we do not wish to give the impression that the exact date is of importance. We are not under the law, but under grace. Our observation of the Memorial Supper is a privilege and opportunity rather than an obligatory command. The principal thing would seem to be that we have a uniform time for its celebration and that we celebrate it with the right thought in mind, viz., as a memorial of the fulfilment of the type of the Passover lamb with the death of Jesus, the Lamb of God, the ransom price for the world. Christ our Passover is slain for us, therefore let us keep the feast. This and not something else we do in remembrance of him, and in confirmation of our covenant to be broken with him and to give our lives with his in the sacrificial services open to us as members of his body in the present time. We conclude that the most appropriate time for the celebration of the Memorial will be Sunday night, April 8th. The Jews adopt this same reckoning, celebrating Tuesday, April 10th, as the beginning of the Passover feast or fifteenth of Nisan. On this same reckoning the fourteenth of Nisan would be Monday, April 9th, and according to Jewish reckoning that day begins the previous evening, namely, Sunday evening, April 8th. On this date, therefore, let us unitedly celebrate the Memorial Supper.

THE SATISFACTION OF JUSTICE

"That God might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth on Jesus."—Rom. 3:26.

Evolutionists, and all those who deny the Scriptural narrative of Genesis, confirmed by the New Testament records—that man was created in the image and likeness of God, and that he fell from this perfection through disobedience into depravity, the fallen and imperfect condition—all such deny that justice needed any satisfaction. Their claim is that God is the author of all the sin and imperfection which we see about us, in that he created us in the blemished condition, but one remove from the brute, and that whatever improvement over the brute we have made is to our credit as a race, hence that neither as a race nor as individuals have we done anything to require divine condemnation. There could, therefore, be no depravity, and consequently no justice in either requiring or providing a redemption from the fall and condemnation—if, as they hold, these ever took place.

The Scriptural proposition is the reverse: that man, created perfect and upright in the divine image, was responsible for his conduct, and that his disobedience justly merited his loss of life; that the divine sentence, "Dying thou shalt die," is a just and reasonable one; that Adam's posterity, inheriting from him the weaknesses and frailties of the fallen state, have more or less increased continually the depraved constitutions, the variations which we see all about us in the physical, mental and moral conditions. As none of the race is perfect, none is worthy of eternal life under the divine arrangement, and the death sentence rests upon all. Thus the Apostle ex-

plains the matter, "By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world, and death as the result of sin, and thus death passed upon all men because all are sinners."—Rom. 5:12.

The Bible proposition is that, since the death sentence is against every member of our race, none of them could justly be released from that sentence without a substitute, a ransom, an atonement for the sin, a satisfaction for the penalty. This is so universally the testimony of the entire Scriptures that time and space would fail us to quote the many instances both in the types and the literal statements on the subject. Nor is this necessary, for all Bible students are familiar with the numerous references to the Redeemer, the ransom, the sacrifice for sins, the "shedding of blood, without which there is no remission."

"IT BEHOVED CHRIST TO SUFFER."—Luke 24:46

We see, then, that from the Bible standpoint it was absolutely necessary that as by a man [Adam] came death, by a man also [Christ] should come the resurrection of the dead. (1 Cor. 15:21.) So then it is evident that in the divine order there could be no resurrection without the ransom sacrifice being first given. This may seem to some to be contradicted by the facts, as they point us to certain individuals brought out of death before Christ came, and others awakened by him before he had paid the ransom price. But we reply that these exceptional cases were not violations of the rule in any degree, for these awakened ones were not really made alive.

From the divine standpoint the whole world is in a dying and dead condition, and those who were awakened from unconscious death to a small measure of life common to the world were not resurrected, were not raised out of death, but were still in death, still under the curse, still under the sentence, "Dying thou shalt die." They were merely temporarily resuscitated. To have resurrected them would have meant more than an awakening: it would have meant that after their awakening they should be raised completely out of death into the fulness of life—such, for instance, as Adam enjoyed before the penalty came upon him. The Scriptures assure us that Christ was the first who should rise from the dead, and that his brethren, the church, will be next in order, and that none others can be fully resuscitated, none others can have life in the absolute sense until the church shall have received its higher life through the first resurrection.

MANY CONFOUND SCRIPTURAL TERMS

When it is seen that the penalty against sin is not dying but death, and that it is not death for a moment or a year or a million years even, but death everlastingly, then it will be clearly seen that in order to have any future life it was necessary that the penalty pronounced by divine justice against our race should be cancelled before it could be blessed with the life eternal which the Lord has promised to those who believe and obey him.

In referring to so complex a subject, the Scriptures, of course, use quite a variety of terms, and the difficulty of many is that they do not recognize the divine plan with sufficient clearness to distinguish between the shades of meaning properly attaching to these words. For instance, we have the words ransom, redemption, sin-offering, atonement, reconciliation, etc. It is true that these are all related to this great subject, but it is equally true that they do not mean the same thing, that they touch the subject from different standpoints. Only by gaining a clear Scriptural view of the whole matter of sin and atonement for sin and reconciliation of the sinner to God can we hope to have this entire matter clear and distinct before our minds, with the proper meaning attached to each word—the proper thought intended by the Lord in these words, which explain his plan.

JUSTICE, WISDOM, LOVE AND POWER

Most people are so unmethodical in their own thinking, in their conduct of their own lives in respect to themselves and in respect to their dealings with others, that it is difficult for them to think of the heavenly Father, who is absolutely perfect in every quality of his being, and who preserves each of his qualities intact without allowing them to interfere the one with the other as being systematic and methodical in the administration of his government. Thus, with the Almighty, justice is declared to be the very foundation of his throne, his government. Nothing can ever be done by the Almighty that can violate his justice. Whatever his wisdom and love and power may plan must all be brought into full accord and alignment with this fundamental element of his character, of his government—justice. He cannot exercise love at the expense of his justice, but only in harmony with it. We must remember that in thinking of the Almighty we cannot measure him by ourselves, because we are fallen creatures, and the image of God originally granted to our race has been largely lost; hence only as we measure the Almighty by his own statements, his own declarations, can we get proper conceptions of the harmonies of his character.

The divine word is immutable, unchangeable, as the Scriptures declare; hence the divine sentence of death was an unchangeable one. True, God might have put a different sentence upon our race. He could have sentenced us as a race to be cut off in death up to a certain time, decreeing that then the penalty should be considered as being paid in full and all the culprits be released. In that event no ransom sacrifice for sinners would have been necessary. But God purposely made his plan as it is in order to furnish the necessity for a Redeemer, and in order that his Son might have the honor of manifesting his loyalty and obedience to the Father even unto death, and in order that this obedient one might then be glorified before angels and men, exalted to the highest place next to the Father. Likewise the Lord purposed that a certain little flock should be selected from the world to be the bride of Christ, and thus to be, through relationship to Christ, members of the seed of Abraham and heirs of the great Oath-Bound Covenant made to Abraham, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord in the inheritance of the Millennial kingdom which is to bless all the families of the earth.

THE DIVINE PROGRAM

As it was optional with the Almighty what the penalty should be for Adam's sin so long as it was in line with justice, so also it was optional with him how that penalty should be

met so long as no principle of justice would be violated. He has chosen a method which most wonderfully exhibits divine wisdom, divine love and divine power. He has purposed the reconciliation of the world to himself through Christ (2 Cor. 5:19.) This reconciliation is in two parts: first, he arranged for the reconciling of his own justice, the meeting of the demands of his own justice; and, second, provided that those who should come to a knowledge of this gracious arrangement might turn their hearts from sin to righteousness, to God, to be reconciled to him, to submit themselves to his will, to come back into harmony with him, forsaking sin.

So far as the world is concerned this reconciliation is still future—God is not yet reconciled to the world, and the world is not yet reconciled to God. That the world is not in a reconciled condition needs no argument in proof; that God is not reconciled to the world can be equally substantiated by the Scriptural statements, which declare that only believers have yet escaped the "condemnation which is on the world." The world is represented as still being aliens and strangers and foreigners, without God, and having no hope. (Eph. 2:12.) The curse is still represented as being against the world, but the promise is given us that by and by, when the divine plan shall have been unfolded still further, the time will come when there shall be no more curse, no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying, because the former things shall have passed away. (Rev. 21:4.) So long, therefore, as divine condemnation, the curse, the sentence of death, rests against the world, it is evident that God is not yet reconciled to the world nor the world to him.

RECONCILIATION THROUGH HIS DEATH

The Apostle assures us that we (true believers) were reconciled to God by the death of his Son. That is, Christ before we were born effected a work for believers on account of which they are no longer reckoned a part of the world nor under the world's condemnation. We have escaped the condemnation which is upon the world, we are justified toward God by his grace through the blood accepted by us in faith. Because of this reconciliation, this justification, the Lord counts us as holy, ignoring and covering from his sight all the blemishes and weaknesses we have received through heredity. And when such justified ones present their bodies living sacrifices to the Lord's will and service, they are acceptable, the Apostle tells us.

This class throughout this Gospel age have experienced the first step of regeneration, namely, the *begetting* of the holy Spirit; the second step, the birth, to the faithful, comes in the first resurrection, when like our Lord we shall be born from the dead as his brethren, under another figure his body members, under another figure his bride and joint-heirs. To this class, to whom divine justice is already reconciled, and who are already reconciled to God in that they have given up their wills to him and are seeking to walk after the Spirit—to this class the Apostle declares God has "committed the ministry of reconciliation."—2 Cor. 5:18.

That is to say, all such are recognized as God's ambassadors in the world, and are commissioned to tell the good tidings in the world in accord with our text, that God, while still just and without violation of his own justice, is able to justify those who believe in Jesus, because Jesus by the grace of God tasted death for every man, and gave the ransom price in his great sacrifice finished at Calvary. But while we are thus God's ambassadors telling the story, the Lord assures us that not all will hear it—that only a certain class have ears to hear the message, and that only those who have faith to believe the message can receive the blessing which we announce. These who now believe and enter into rest through faith are but a few, "not many wise, not many great, not many learned hath God chosen," but "chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, to be heirs of the kingdom"—a "little flock."—1 Cor. 1:26; Jas. 2:5; Luke 12:32.

DECLARING THAT GOD IS RECONCILED

This ministry of reconciliation which consecrated believers are now privileged to engage in as members of the body of Christ, as his representatives, is a costly ministry or service. Although the message is good, the darkness hateth the light, and the light-bearers, we are assured, must expect to suffer persecution, must walk in the footsteps of the Captain of their Salvation. Those who will not take up their cross to follow him cannot be counted in as his ambassadors. The trials, the difficulties, the oppositions, the persecutions encountered are all parts of the test which the Lord requires of these, as demonstrating their loyalty to him and to the principles of justice and mercy and love—represented in him and his laws.

However, the Lord has a provision for the world—those now deaf and blind—in the next age, and the divine arrangement is that those who now suffer because of their loyalty to

the Lord and because of their pleasure in the privileges of ambassadorship, shall be the divine representatives before the world in the coming age. The conditions will then be so changed that these ambassadors and their message will no longer be misunderstood. The special testings and trials of the narrow way will by that time have selected all the elect, the bride of Christ. Then the way and glorious opportunities will open before the world, that all may have the eyes of their understanding opened wide and their ears unstopped, that they may know positively respecting divine wisdom, justice, love and power, and that these are all operating through Christ for the blessing of all the families of the earth. That period is called the "day of Christ" in contrast to the present period, which is represented as being the night of sin, under the darkness and influence of the prince of this world, Satan.

"In that day" the work of reconciliation will go grandly forward, for undoubtedly the great majority of mankind, as soon as the curse shall be removed, as soon as the difficulties and obstructions to faith shall be out of the way, will be glad to know of opportunities for coming back into harmony with their Creator. And then all the willing and obedient shall be uplifted to full perfection of life, to full restitution to all that was lost, with added blessings, while the wilfully disobedient or goat class, followers of the example and spirit of Satan, will with him be destroyed in the second death.

CHURCH AND WORLD DISTINCT

From the foregoing all should be able to see how distinctly separate in the divine plan are the church and the world—that atonement, reconciliation, has already been effected for the church, for believers, for the household of faith and for none others, but that the world is to have a rolling away of the curse in fullest measure as an outcome of the great redemption work of Christ—in God's due time.

If, now, we have the matter clearly before our minds—if, looking into the divinely appointed types of the Old Testament and their corroborations in the New Testament, we find that God distinctly outlined these separate dealings with the church and with the world, our faith and obedience and joy in the Lord will be increased. We have already set this matter forth in detail in a pamphlet entitled *Tabernacle Shadows of the Better Sacrifices*. All of the interested doubtless possess it; and any too poor to purchase may have it free, on application. In it we call attention to the fact that the great and important event in Israel's history known as the Day of Atonement typified, illustrated, the whole work of this Gospel age.

The sin offerings of that typical Day of Atonement were two, first the bullock, second the goat. The bullock represented our Lord Jesus, the goat represented those who walk in his steps, the little flock. The sacrifice of the bullock was for a specific purpose and effected that purpose; the sacrifice of the goat of the sin offering was for a different purpose and effected that purpose. The bullock with its fatness well represented the man Christ Jesus in his perfection sacrificed on our behalf; the lean, wayward goat with little fat well represented the leanness, the poverty, the natural unfitness of the church to be associated with her Lord and to present herself a living sacrifice with him upon the altar, to have fellowship in his sufferings, that in due time she might have fellowship also in the glories that are to follow in the kingdom.

THE PRIEST SACRIFICED THE BULLOCK

Be it noted that our Lord Jesus was typified both by the bullock and the priest; that the bullock represented him as the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all; that the priest represented the new mind, the holy Spirit, by which our Lord was begotten again at the moment of his consecration. During the three and a half years of our Lord's ministry he was the priest, and his body was the sacrifice, reckoned dead. In the type the priest went immediately into the Holy of the Tabernacle, which represented his standing before God as now no longer a man but a new creature. The first veil represented his consecration to death, and his rising on the other side of it to newness of life as a spirit being begotten of the holy Spirit.

As a "new creature" our Lord spent the three years and a half of his ministry in the holy, enlightened by the light of the golden candlestick, divine truth, fed by the shew bread, the divine promises and blessing, while he himself ministered at the golden altar, offering up his two handsfull of incense upon the fire, the fragrance penetrating beyond the veil, the second veil, into the Most Holy, as a cloud resting above the Ark of the Covenant, the Mercy Seat. That offering of the incense by the priest in the Holy represents to us the light in which our heavenly Father viewed his Son and his offering of himself in the trials and difficulties of his life during the three and a half years of his consecration. As a

whole it was sweet incense to the Lord, a fragrant incense, holy and acceptable.

THREE VIEWS OF THE SACRIFICE

At the same time that the incense was being offered in the Holy the fat was being offered on the brazen altar in the Court, and those who saw the fat consumed upon the altar and how rapidly it was consumed because of the fatness could appreciate that a great and fat sacrifice was offered to the Lord. Those in the Court who thus beheld our Lord's sacrifice from the human standpoint were believers, those in sympathy with him, the apostles and others. But there was still another class who looked to Jesus and who saw his daily sacrifice and who viewed his course in a different light—the Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, who were in opposition to him. To these his very sacrifices spoke foolishness, they were a stench in their nostrils, and their standpoint of view is also represented in the type by the burning outside the camp of the hoofs, horns, entrails, hide, etc., of the bullock. Here we have the three-fold view of our Lord's sacrifice: that of his opposers, that of his followers and that of the Father. When our Lord died all three of these fires, so to speak, were finished, his incense was all offered, the fat was all consumed, the world's detestation of his good works, the hatred with which they of the darkness hated him who was of the light was at an end—he troubled them no more.

BEYOND THE SECOND VAIL

The next step of the priest was to pass under the second veil. This represented our Lord's death at Calvary. He was under that veil parts of three days and rose on the other side of the veil, a perfect spirit being, born of the Spirit. And it was only a few days thereafter that he ascended on high and approached the Mercy Seat, there to appear in the presence of God for us, as the Scriptures declare. Bear in mind that he did not appear for the world but for us, for believers. He is not the world's advocate before the Father. We have an advocate with the Father, he is *our* representative, he now speaks for us. (1 Jno. 2:1.) In the type this is shown by the statement that the priest sprinkled the blood upon the Mercy Seat and before the Mercy Seat in the shape of a cross, the head of the cross being on the Mercy Seat, the lower end of it pointing and extending toward the veil.

The Apostle tells us that Christ offered up his own blood, but by this we do not understand him to mean that any of the literal blood of Jesus was taken into heaven, but rather as the blood shed represented the sacrificed life of the Lord, so in the antitype our Lord presented before the Father the evidences of his death, applying a measure of that benefit, a measure of the merit of his sacrifice on behalf of the church, his body, and all the household of faith, but none of it on behalf of the world, none of it outside the household of faith. This is clearly shown in the type, for the priest, we are told, made an offering for himself and his house. His house, the Levites, typified the household of faith, himself represented his sons the underpriests, and in the antitype represented the church, the members of the body of Christ under Jesus as the Head, as it is written, "God gave Jesus to be the Head over the church, which is his body."

The statement of the type is most explicit that the atonement made for his sacrifice, by the sprinkling of the blood of the bullock, was an atonement not for all the people but merely for a limited, special class of them, all belonging to one tribe, the Levites, who represent here the household of faith. (Leviticus 16:6, 17.) It will be noticed that this is in full, in absolute accord with what we have already seen, to the effect that the reconciliation has not yet reached the world but merely believers, and that the world still, as the Apostle says, lieth in the wicked one. (1 John 2:19.) The whole world lies under the curse, the sentence; they are not yet released, the curse has not yet been rolled away. Only we, only believers, have escaped the condemnation; only we have passed from death unto life; only believers have gotten free from the curse, the sentence, and are no longer aliens, strangers, foreigners from God's covenant promises.

SACRIFICING THE LORD'S GOAT

Now note the second sacrifice. After finishing the one part of atonement, as already noted, the priest continued the work of the day's atonement and made another offering, namely, the goat. It is not true that Christ after having gone into heaven, into the Most Holy, came out again, sacrificing himself again as a man, making another sacrifice for sins in his own person. Indeed he had only the one human nature, and when it was sacrificed the work of Calvary was finished. Hence this second sin offering is not another offering of the man Christ Jesus, but it is an offering of his body. Never-

theless, in harmony with the divine plan, Christ accepts and the Father accepts all those who come unto the Father by him through faith in his blood, and who in harmony with the call present their bodies living sacrifices. These all are counted as members of the body of Christ; so the work of this Gospel age has been the sacrificing of the members of the body of Christ. It was the Head that did this sacrificing as represented in the type, as represented also in the figure of baptism.

We give ourselves to the Lord, receive his mind, and in proportion as his spirit dwells in us richly, in that proportion we are glad to be "living sacrifices." Thus by his spirit upon us he wills in us "to will and to do the Father's good pleasure." And the Father's good pleasure respecting us is the same as respecting the Only Begotten, namely, that we should show our devotion to his will, to his plan, to his righteousness, by such faithfulness as will bring us in the present time tribulation and cost us self-sacrifice, even as a similar course cost our Lord his life.

Not that all the members of the body of Christ will necessarily suffer on the cross, nor that they will all necessarily suffer some public, shameful death. On the contrary, in the figure of the Scriptures all the members of the body of Christ are beheaded, not literally, for not even the apostles so suffered death, but figuratively beheaded—each must lose his own self-will, his own headship, and must become members of the body of Christ, knowing no head, no will but the will of his Lord. All who thus sacrifice their wills are accepted of the Lord as members of his body, and these are represented in the sacrifice of the goat, which he has been offering as a part of himself, as a part of his own sacrifice throughout this Gospel age.

"OUR SUFFICIENCY IS OF CHRIST"

The making of these two sin offerings does not imply that the first offering was insufficient. On the contrary, the Scriptures assure us that the whole merit of redemption resides in the Lamb of God, whose sacrifice takes away the sin of the world. But as our Lord's testing was necessary as a demonstration of his loyalty to the Father even unto death—was a consideration in respect to his high exaltation to the glory, honor and immortality—so in the Father's plan none can ever reach that same plane and be his joint-heirs in the kingdom except as they shall demonstrate that they are possessed and controlled by the same spirit as that of their Redeemer. Hence the arrangement has been made that while Christ's death was a full value for the redemption of Adam and all his race, and full value for the sin, and atonement for the whole world of mankind, God has been pleased to apply that merit in an indirect way of first imputing righteousness to the church and allowing the church thus to be adopted as members of the body of Christ, and as members of his body permitting the Head to see to our sacrificing as parts of his own sacrifice, that he might thus offer us up as acceptable sacrifices, as a part of himself, that we might ultimately be with him partakers of his divine nature and sharers of his glory.

"IF WE SUFFER WITH HIM"

In this view all the Scriptures agree, that the sufferings of Christ are being filled up by the church, which is his body. This, the Apostle tells us, was what was prophesied in olden times, namely, "the sufferings of Christ and the glory that would follow." The glory has not yet come, though we believe it is near. The reason for the long delay of the glory has been that the sufferings of Christ might be completed. Had it been the Father's plan that only Jesus was to suffer and only Jesus was to be glorified, then indeed the glory might have come more than eighteen centuries ago. The delay of the glory is in our interest, that, as the Apostle declared, "We might fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ."—Col. 1:24.

In harmony with this statement are all the promises and encouragements of the New Testament; for instance the Apostle's statement, "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him," "if we be dead with him we shall also live with him." (2 Tim. 2:12; Rom. 6:8.) After pointing out that we are heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, the Apostle adds the conditions, namely, "If so be that we suffer with him." In expressing his own hope of a share in the kingdom with our Lord the Apostle declares that he counts all things but loss and dross in comparison with the privilege of knowing him and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death, that he might also know, experience, the blessed honors and favors of our Lord's resurrection, the first resurrection to glory, honor, immortality, the divine nature.

Coming back to the type, we see that the sacrifice of the goat was identical with that of the bullock in every particular: The priest shall do with the goat as he did with the bullock. The little fat of the goat was placed upon the altar, its small

hoofs, horns and skin were burned without the camp, and represented the opposition of the world to those who are the Lord's true followers; and the High Priest again, as representing this class, the members of his body, offered incense upon the golden altar, and at the conclusion he again went into the Most Holy with the blood of the goat, which he sprinkled as he had previously done with the blood of the bullock, but not for the same purpose. The Lord's members have no share whatever in any atonement for themselves, no power to do aught to cleanse themselves from any sin or stain or to lift themselves out of condemnation; all that was done for them before they had any privilege of sacrificing. This second sacrifice of the Day of Atonement, we are specifically told, was to "make atonement for the sins of the people"—Israel in general outside the priestly tribe representing the world outside the present household of faith.—Lev. 16:15.

Throughout the Day of Atonement all the Israelites, representing all the families of the earth, were excluded from divine favor. They were under sin, under the curse, and conducted themselves in a manner to correspond with this thought. They fasted and wore sackcloth and ashes and humbled themselves in the dust, waiting for the completion of the Atonement Day sacrifices, which would reconcile them to God and bring his blessing. They continued so until the second sacrifice of the Atonement Day had been completed, until the blood of the goat had been offered for the sins of the people. Then the High Priest came out of the Tabernacle. He had finished the work which he went in to do. He changed his garments. Laying aside the white linen garments of the Day of Atonement he put on the garments of glory and beauty, his usual habiliments, and went forth to the people at the altar, and raising his hands gave them the blessing of the Lord Jehovah, which represented the forgiveness of the sins of the world, the rolling away of the curse or the sentence of death, the bringing of the whole world back into relationship to God. Then the people arose from the dust and gave a shout of thanksgiving. These pantomime doings were all typical.—Heb. 9:24, 28.

Throughout this Gospel age, the antitypical Day of Atonement, the whole world has been under condemnation except the few who have heard of the grace of God and accepted the same, and who thus have become reckoned of the favored, antitypical tribe of Levi, the household of faith. As for the remainder of the world, the Apostle explains their condition of sackcloth and ashes, saying, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain until now—waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God."—Rom. 8:22.

In the type Natural Israel waited for the great High Priest, in the antitype the world waits for the great High Priest Jesus, the Head of the church, and the members of his body—the glorified sons of God, who at the second advent of Christ and the establishment of his kingdom will be revealed to the world in power and great glory, to give them knowledge of the remission of their sins, and to give them every assistance in uplifting them and in restoring all the willing and obedient to harmony with the Lord.

THE MEDIATORIAL WORK

To rightly understand the foregoing is to discern that our Lord Jesus in his own person has been the Mediator between the Father and the household of faith during this gospel age, and that in the divine order he is now selecting the members of his body, who with him and under him as the Head will be the Mediator between God and the world in the age to follow this—during the Millennial age.

We are not to lose sight of the fact that all the responsibility is with the Head, and that the Lord requires of every one who shall be accepted as a member of the body of Christ that he shall lose his own headship, his own individuality, and shall accept instead the will and mind of Christ. As the Apostle says, "We have the mind of Christ," who is our head.—1 Cor. 2:16.

From this standpoint Jesus is always the Mediator—just as a man weighing a hundred pounds might fill an office, and if afterward he took on flesh and weighed two hundred pounds or more, he would still be the same man; what he added to his bulk would in no wise interfere with his individuality. So it is with Christ, he merely adds on these members. His own individuality is maintained, however many members may be added. It is still Jesus, still the Christ, who would be thought of and addressed, and the whole work accomplished is still the work of Christ. This is merely the divine method by which a little flock from amongst men are privileged to become associated with Jesus, in suffering with him now, in being glorified with him by and by. This is marvelous in our eyes, and none but our God would or could have conceived so broad and deep and high and glorious an arrangement.

JESUS A RANSOM FOR ALL

Several texts come to mind, as, for instance, "By a man came death, by a man also comes the resurrection from the dead," "Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man," "He gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (1 Cor. 15:21; Heb. 2:9; 1 Tim. 2:6.) How do these texts fit in to what we have found to be the established testimony of God's Word respecting the relationship of the church to her Lord in the sufferings as well as in the glory to follow?

They all fit perfectly when rightly viewed. They declare that the whole merit of the world's salvation was through Jesus—that is, centered in his death. Every Scripture so teaches; not a single Scripture implies that there is merit or efficacy in the sacrifice of the body members of Christ aside from the merit which those members received first through the sacrifice of Jesus. It is the merit of Christ, therefore, that reaches the world, that blesses the world, that is the ransom price for the world, although it is made to come through a circuitous route instead of going directly to the world. A portion of the world receives the blessing first, the believers; but the blessing does not stop with them, but does flow through them to all the families of the earth. These texts are all in full accord in ascribing the whole merit of salvation and the complete satisfaction of justice to the merit of our Lord's sacrifice finished personally at Calvary, but by divine consent continued indirectly through his adopted members.

TIME IN THE SATISFACTION OF JUSTICE

Let us inquire respecting the time of the satisfaction of justice. Was justice satisfied when the Lord left the glory which he had with the Father and was born a babe? No! was it satisfied when he reached manhood's estate and had presented himself, the man Christ Jesus, at the time of his baptism, consecrating his life? No! for although the Father there accepted the sacrifice, and evidenced the acceptance by the giving of the holy Spirit, the sacrifice itself was not yet complete. Was justice satisfied at the close of the three and a half years' ministry, when on the cross he cried, "It is finished?" No! Satisfaction was not yet accomplished, though the means of satisfaction was now in our Lord's hands. Was satisfaction of justice accomplished when our Lord ascended up on high and appeared in the presence of God for us? Yes, we answer. Justice was satisfied so far as the "us" class was concerned, but not beyond the "us," the believers, the "household of faith." As already shown the curse still rests upon the world, which is still declared of the Lord to be under "condemnation."

Does the sacrifice of the Lord's people throughout this age

down to the present time satisfy justice? No! All the members of the body of Christ are counted in as one, and the sacrificing of the body members is not yet completed. Will justice be satisfied when the last member of the church shall have suffered as a member of the body of Christ? No! it will still be necessary for the "Head," after having supervised the sacrifice, to present the "members"—to present before the Father the evidence that these adopted members followed in his steps, completed their consecration even unto death faithfully. Thus he will present us before the Father "blameless," "irreproachable." (Phil. 2:15.) Then the merit of this *adopted portion* of our Lord's sacrifice will be presented on behalf of the world, and, as shown us in the type, the Father is sure to accept it and to grant the full blessing, which will mean the rolling away, in every sense, of the sentence, the curse now resting upon the race.—Col. 1:26, 27.

"EVEN SO, FATHER, FOR SO IT SEEMED GOOD IN THY SIGHT"

Was it necessary for God to arrange the matter thus that the church might have fellowship in the sufferings as well as in the glory of Christ, might be a part of the sin offering of the Day of Atonement as members of the body as well as his members in the throne? We answer that nothing was necessary except as God had previously determined to make it so; but, as the Apostle declares, this is a part of the mystery hid from previous ages and generations, that we should have fellowship, participation, with the Messiah in the sufferings as well as in the glory.

As we have seen, the fact that any atonement sacrifice was necessary was merely of the divine arrangement. God could have put a penalty upon Adam and his race that would not have required a redemption sacrifice. He chose the redemption plan because it would the better illustrate his government and the laws of his empire, that it might illustrate his wisdom, justice, love and power, and he added this feature of allowing the church as members of the body of Christ to be participants with him as a further illustration of the same divine wisdom, justice, love and power. From God's standpoint the whole transaction of redemption is one, divided into two parts.

If the Day of Atonement were represented by the personal sufferings of our Lord Jesus' sacrifice, the antitype would be three and a half years at least; but when we see the full meaning of the divine plan we perceive that the Atonement Day lasts for nearly nineteen centuries, and that the "times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began" are delayed, until at the conclusion of this Atonement Day the great antitypical Jubilee shall be fully ushered in.

HOLY, HARMLESS, PERFECT

Luke 2:40-52.—JANUARY 21.

Golden Text:—"Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man."

One peculiarity of the Bible, which differentiates it from all other religious books, is its candor, its faithfulness to facts. Without specially preaching against them it mentions the weaknesses, the blemishes, the failures of the various heroes which it draws to our attention: Mother Eve's deception, father Adam's disobedience without deception, Abraham's error in not properly acknowledging his wife, Moses' mistake in respect to the smiting of the rock the second time, the shortcomings of Eli, Samson, Saul, David, Solomon and others of Old Testament times. The New Testament similarly mentions the strife amongst the apostles as to who should be the greatest, the wrong spirit of James and John in connection with the Samaritans, Peter's denial of the Lord, the dispute between Barnabas and Paul respecting John Mark, etc. This faithfulness of the Word of God in pointing out that there is none righteous, no not one, amongst all the race of Adam—that all need forgiveness, reconciliation to the Father through the atoning sacrifice—proves the reliability of its testimony.

Noting that the Scriptures were written by various pens during a period of sixteen centuries, and that they all manifest the same uniformity, honesty, impresses upon us all the more the full import of their declarations respecting Jesus—that he was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." This was in accord with the predictions of the prophets respecting Messiah, also with the narrative of his birth, boyhood, youth, manhood, to his resurrection and ascension to glory. Angels and men declare to us that he was separate from sinners, that his life came not from the impaired and condemned Adamic stock, but was a transference from a spirit existence previously enjoyed. His perfection, his keeping of the divine law, his acceptance with the Father, were fully dem-

onstrated and assured to us in that "God raised him from the dead on the third day."—1 Cor. 15:4.

THE BOYHOOD OF JESUS

Our lesson (v. 40) declares that prior to his reaching his twelfth year he had been growing in stature and in strength and was gradually being filled with wisdom. We are not to forget that he was separate from sinners, nor to expect that other boys at his age should manifest the same degree of wisdom. Quite to the contrary—inheriting blemishes, mental, physical, moral, they would not belong to the same class at all. Our Lord Jesus is not a pattern for the natural man, and in harmony with this thought he is not introduced to us as our exemplar until he reached the age of manhood, consecrated his life to the doing of the work which the Father had committed to him, and had begun his ministry under the anointing of the holy Spirit.

Nor is his earthly ministry nor his teachings the example or pattern for the world: these are merely for his footstep followers, his disciples—those who, justified through faith in his blood, have similarly made a covenant with the Lord by sacrifice, by full consecration of themselves to live not unto themselves but unto him who died for them. Doubtless there is heavenly wisdom in connection with the limited description given us of the childhood and youth of our Savior. These were not our examples, and indeed any attempt to measure the ordinary degree. Let us not, then, attempt to imagine with particularity what the Lord has seen fit to cover and not reveal. Let us content ourselves with the simple narrative, with the meager testimony of the Gospel on this subject—that Jesus developed in wisdom as well as in physical strength.

THE GRACE OF GOD UPON HIM

The word "grace" signifies that which gives pleasure, as loveliness of form or character, or the most admirable virtues. Hence the grace of God signifies his favor, that Jesus as a child was such a one as the Father had pleasure in, and, reversely, such a one as reflected in his form and character the grace, perfection, the beauty which is of God. John, speaking of our Savior, says, "We beheld his glory,—the beauty of the only begotten of the Father." All this speaks perfection in its most absolute sense, and would be very discouraging not only to other children but to their parents also were it understood that the boy Jesus was given of God to be a pattern or model for others. On the other hand it is important for us to know this, as corroborating the testimony that he was undefiled, separate from sinners, holy and acceptable to the Father from infancy to manhood.

In divine providence our Lord was not only born under favorable religious influences, but trained in that way. His mother and her husband were pious, reverent, and evidently disposed to be obedient to every feature of the divine Law to the extent of their ability. In accord with the demands of the Law they went annually to Jerusalem to the feast of Passover, the great religious gathering which called the typical people from one end of their land to the other to a special worship of the Lord, to a special remembrance of their deliverance from Egypt, to their adoption as his people and incidentally to the observance of a type of the coming blessings through the killing of the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, and whose flesh is meat indeed and whose blood is drink indeed—symbolically.

JESUS A SON OF THE LAW

It had been the custom of Joseph and Mary to go to these feasts every year, and doubtless Jesus, as he grew older, went with them. The one mentioned in our lesson was noteworthy above the others because of our Lord's conduct on this occasion—different from what it had previously been and what it subsequently was. Under the Jewish custom a boy at twelve years of age was supposed to make some kind of a consecration of himself, some kind of a special recognition of the law, on account of which he was called a "son of the law," a child of the law.

The wisdom in which our Lord had been growing up to that time, like all other things pertaining to the Jewish system, was intimately interwoven with the law and the prophets. He recognized himself as being not the son of Joseph but the son of God, and knew that he had come into the world on a special mission, and it was a preliminary step on his part to gain wisdom respecting the work he was to do as it had been outlined in the promises, in the law, and through the testimonies of the prophets. Wise far beyond his years because of his perfection, his mind doubtless seized upon the custom of the twelfth year: doubtless he wondered if this custom of becoming a son of the law did not in some sense of the word imply that he at that age should become in some measure identified with the law as a student, or in some other capacity.

Of winsome manner, in favor with man as well as with God, and wise hearted, Joseph and Mary found little necessity for keeping close watch over his doings. He was apparently, for a child of his age, especially well able to take care of himself. Hence it was that on returning from the feast they went a full day's journey before noticing that he was not with any of their company, and had evidently been left behind at Jerusalem. It required a day to return to Jerusalem, and on the third day seeking him they found him in the Temple. They were amazed to see a child of twelve years seated amongst the doctors of the law, listening to their discussions and asking questions. We are not told of the nature of the questions of those three days, but we may be sure that they all pertained to the law and the covenants and the prophets respecting Messiah and his work.

Jesus, having already pondered these matters in his own mind, was now seeking all the wisdom he could secure from those who would naturally be best informed on these subjects. Doubtless a part of his inquiry was at what age Messiah could in any measure begin his work, and whether or not the custom of considering a boy the son of the law at twelve years of age was founded upon anything in the law or was merely a human tradition. Apparently he would have been glad to have found something in the law to have justified his entrance upon some department of the Father's business, but found nothing, as this was merely a provision of the Talmud and not of divine authority.

In response to their gentle chiding that he had caused

them worry, uneasiness, and that they had been seeking him, Jesus replied, "Why need you have sought me? Did you not know that I would be somewhere about my Father's house?" We prefer this free translation, in accord with the revised version, to the one given in our common version. We may be sure that those days spent in the Temple, studying the exceeding great and precious promises of God's Word, were a feast to that wonderful child's expansive and expanding mind. Apparently he had reached the solution of his queries, and determined that it was not in accordance with divine providence that he should in any sense of the word begin his ministry or public work at this time. In harmony with this conclusion we read that he returned with them to Nazareth and was obedient to them—did not attempt to begin his heavenly mission.

"TRAIN UP A CHILD"

We cannot encourage imperfect parents to expect to rear imperfect children full of wisdom and the graces of perfection, but we can assure them that very much indeed depends upon the way in which they train their children as to what kind of men or women they shall become, and whether they shall bring to their parents happiness or unhappiness, sorrow or joy. It is a sad fact that many parents train up their children in the way they should not go—plant in them the wrong sentiments, which subsequently bring forth characteristics of which they are ashamed, for which they reproach and reprove the children, and against which the children when grown may be obliged to battle for the remainder of life. What a blessing it would be both to parents and to children did the former rightly understand how early the training and disciplining is necessary—that it should begin in the parent before the child is born; that discipline, obedience, insisted upon with firmness and kindness, should be inculcated from the day of birth persistently.

Where a child has been reasonably well born, has been reared under the influences of a Christian home, in which the Bible is the recognized standard, in which one or both the parents are consecrated to the Lord, in which prayer is a constant testimony to that parent's faith in the Lord and trust in his providential care, in which the parent not only seeks to exemplify the fruits of the Spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, long suffering, brotherly kindness, love—but seeks to inculcate these in the children, the child so trained under such experiences would, we believe, very generally be ready at the age of twelve years to make a consecration of himself to the Lord—to seek after and strive to follow the instructions of the divine message.

The promises to those who early give their hearts to the Lord are known to us all, and many have proven their wisdom—"They that seek me early shall find me;" "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." (Prov. 8:7; 22:6) Train up a child to sow wild oats, to go thoughtlessly, irreverently, selfishly through the world, and when he is old it will be very difficult indeed to turn him out of the ruts of selfishness into the highway of decency, consideration and love for others.

We will admit that ours is a very difficult day in which to properly rear children. Nevertheless, instead of making the parent lax and indifferent in respect to his obligations, it should lead him to the greater diligence and to the more earnest seeking of wisdom from on high, that he may so discharge his duty toward the child as to bless it for life with a proper foundation of character laid in the proper cement of appreciation of justice, righteousness, mercy and truth.

ADVANCED IN WISDOM

The statement that Jesus progressed in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man (v. 52), relates to the period of his life from twelve years of age upward to the time of his presentation to Israel in his thirtieth year as the Lamb of God. Apparently not Mary only kept the things which she had heard and seen in her heart, pondering how they would develop and how the words of the angel Gabriel would be fulfilled in her son, but Jesus also kept the whole matter a secret with himself up to the proper time, when he entered publicly at the earliest moment upon his ministry. Undoubtedly this was the course of wisdom; he was not yet anointed to preach, hence had no authority so to do.

Similarly all who hear the good tidings now would best not begin to minister the truth to others by explaining it until first they have received of God the unction from one high—the anointing of the holy Spirit. Before they begin their ministry they should make the consecration whose acceptance by God would bring them unto the place of adoption and anointing, and qualify them for the telling of the good tidings of great joy which ultimately shall be unto all people.

PREPARATION FOR THE KINGDOM

Mark 1:10-11.—JANUARY 28.

Golden Text:—"Prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only."—1 Sam. 7:3.

John the Baptist was our Lord's forerunner, foretold in the Old Testament Scriptures, as indicated by the opening statements of this lesson. He was the messenger of Jehovah to announce Messiah and to do a work amongst the Jewish people, which is prophetically described as making straight or ready the path before him. We are not to confound this reference to a messenger of Jehovah preparing the way before Jesus with the title given to our Lord himself, the "Messenger of the Covenant." Both John and Jesus were messengers or representatives, but the latter, on a far higher scale, was the Messenger through whom God's covenant with mankind was about to be established—the Messenger or Mediator of the New Covenant, sealed through the precious blood, and to become operative to the world in general during the Millennial age.

HERALDING THE MESSIAH

As the Scriptures point out, John was just six months older than Jesus, and as both began their ministries at the age of thirty, it follows that John had been preaching just six months when Jesus came to him for baptism at the opening of his ministry. What kind of a work did John do during those six months? The answer is given us in verses seven and eight. He announced himself the forerunner, the trumpeter as it were, of the great Messiah, and declared that it was necessary that the people should come into a condition of heart-repentance if they would be ready for the Messiah and prepared to enjoy the blessings and favors of God which Messiah would dispense. John made no pretensions of being the Messiah himself, but humbly declared that the one who would be shortly made known to Israel as Messiah was so much greater that he (John) would not be worthy to stoop down and loose the fastenings of his shoes—his sandals. He proclaimed that those who would be ready for Messiah and the kingdom should not only renounce sin and reform their lives but should publicly declare the same—symbolizing it by a baptism in water. And yet he assured them that this baptism which he performed for them was as nothing compared to that greater baptism which Messiah would give to the faithful—a baptism of the holy Spirit; yea, also, to some a baptism of fire.

John's prophetic message was most distinctly fulfilled. Those Israelites indeed who received Jesus as the Messiah were in due time, at Pentecost, baptized with the holy Spirit from the Father as members of the body of Christ. Moreover, a work of grace was continued with the Jewish nation, and for over thirty years the apostles and other believers sifted thoroughly that people for every true grain of wheat and gathered them into the Gospel garner—into the anointed body, the church. Then, all the true wheat having been found, the fire came upon the remainder of that nation—the fire of trouble which consumed and destroyed their national polity, causing indescribable suffering and scattering the remainder of that people throughout the earth. Some were baptized with the holy Spirit and some with fire.

GOD'S UNPRETENTIOUS SERVANT

John the Baptist is described as the last of the prophets. With him the old dispensation terminated, as with our Lord the new dispensation began. Apparently adopting somewhat the manner and dress of Elijah of old, his prototype, John was conspicuous amongst the people by reason of the simplicity of his dress, which indicated that his entire life was devoted to the special service of the Lord—that he was not seeking to serve earthly or selfish interests in any respect—comparatively he had nothing, wanted nothing, needed nothing. The messenger of Jehovah, he could have been provided for sumptuously; but as God would speak not merely to the great but especially to the humble and lowly, his representative or messenger appeared amongst men under humble conditions. And it was the most humble that had the hearing ear for the Lord's message. Nevertheless we are informed that great multitudes went out, and excitement prevailed amongst the people—a revival service. John and his disciples were kept busily engaged telling the people that Messiah was near, that the kingdom would shortly be set up, that they must repent of their sins if they would be ready for a share in that kingdom, and baptizing those who, turning to God, confessed their sins.

When Jesus came to John and requested baptism another account tells us that John demurred, declaring that our Lord had no sins that he needed to repent of—that if either one needed baptism it was John himself. The inference is that John did not urge any to be baptized, except such as realized themselves to be transgressors against the law, who had not been living up to its requirements to the extent of their ability, and that himself and others who had been living consistent lives did not need this baptism. We are to remember the Apostle's word, that the whole nation of Israel had been

baptized into Moses in the sea and in the cloud when they left Egypt (1 Cor. 10:2). They were still in Moses, except as they had neglected the Law Covenant which he established. John's baptism was intended to bring the hearts of the people back into accord with the Law, into accord with Moses, that thus they might be ready for transfer from Moses to Christ—from the typical house of servants to be made the antitypical house of sons. "For Moses verily was faithful as a servant over his house, but Christ as a son over his house, whose house are we if we hold fast."—Heb. 3:5-6.

HOLY, HARMLESS, SEPARATE FROM SINNERS

The Lord did not say to John, "You are mistaken, I am a sinner," for he never denied what the Scriptures everywhere set forth—that he was holy, harmless, undefiled and totally separate from the race of sinners. Indeed he did not explain to John why he was baptized nor what his baptism signified. John could not have understood, none could understand our Lord's motives until after Pentecost. In the light of the New Testament we see that our Lord's baptism was a new thing, totally distinct from John's baptism; that it symbolized or represented a baptism unto death—a burial of the will into the will of God, and the beginning of a reckonedly new life as a reckonedly new creature, symbolized by the rising from the water.

Thus our Lord's baptism into water symbolized a baptism into death, a consecration to death; and this consecration he fulfilled in the subsequent three and a half years of his ministry, which ended on the cross with his cry, "It is finished." And this is the baptism which belongs to us his followers—not a washing away of sins, not a returning to Mosaic covenant relationship as Jews, but a consecration of our justified selves, the presentation of our mortal bodies, living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, our reasonable service—to be completed in our natural death and in our resurrection beyond the veil.

"MY BELOVED SON"

An account of this same baptism of our Lord in another Gospel represents John as saying, "I, John, saw and bare record"—respecting the dove, etc. This lesson merely recites the fact that the heavens were opened and the Spirit like a dove descended upon the Lord, and a voice from heaven said, "Thou art my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased"—without saying he saw the dove or heard the voice. Our thought is that John the Baptist alone witnessed this testimony to our Lord's relationship to God, that he alone saw the messenger of divine favor, and that he and Jesus alone heard and understood the voice. It was not necessary that others should see and hear. John was to be the witness, and this evidence was given him in order that he might declare, as he did, that the Lord had previously given him an assurance that the one upon whom he should see the holy Spirit descend and abide was the Messiah, and that this prediction was fulfilled upon the person of Jesus.

Similarly throughout this Gospel age the world knoweth us not: it sees not our anointing of the holy Spirit. It merely knows that the claim is made for the church that, as the body of Christ, its members are recipients of the same holy Spirit that came upon Jesus the Head—that we are all baptized by the one Spirit into one body (1 Cor. 12:13). All that the world can see is the fact of this baptism. The effect upon the Lord was his devotion to his Father's work, the ministry of the truth, even at the cost of the sacrifice of his life. And so with the church also; it has a ministry of the truth even unto death—laying down our lives for the brethren. The world recognizes a difference between this spirit and the worldly spirit, and yet knows not, appreciates not, but thinks rather of the Lord's faithful as they thought of Jesus and the apostles—that they are unwise, foolish, in spending time, influence, talent, means, in what the world regards as the "foolishness of preaching."

We have seen in previous lessons that while John was a partial antitype of Elijah on a limited scale, he by no means fulfilled the entire type. He was, we might say, an antitype on a small scale to the little nation of Israel. The kingdom was indeed offered to natural Israel, but only a remnant of that people had heartily repented of sin and were truly ready to welcome Messiah, and the rest were blinded, while the few were received of the Lord at Pentecost and became the nucleus or foundation of the kingdom which, during this Gospel age, has progressed in development in embryo—unborn, unseen of the world, unknown. Soon the completed embryo will be born in the resurrection, and thus the kingdom will be fully established in power and great glory—the Christ.

Not only are we called of God to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ in the kingdom which is soon to be