

COUNTING THE BLOOD COMMON

"Of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the Covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing [a common thing] and hath done despite to the spirit of favor."—Hebrews 10:29.

The Apostle is here evidently contrasting Moses and his law with the Antitypical Moses and the greater law. Any one who despised the law of Moses, the arrangement made and established through the typical Law Covenant, was condemned to death, a sentence from which he is to be released through the merit of Christ. Since that condemnation was merely of a temporal character this does not affect his eternal interests.

It is evident that there is a difference between these two condemnations—that if any one should come under the condemnation of the Antitypical Moses his punishment would be even more severe. This severer, or "sorer punishment," we understand to be the "second death"—utter annihilation. If any one despises the law of God, in any particular, as expressed through Christ and the New Covenant arrangement, he will be worthy of the second death. This principle, we see, will apply all through the Millennial age, in the sense that any and every one who, after being brought to a knowledge of the provisions and favors that God has brought to him through Christ, shall then treat the matter lightly and fail to reciprocate such love, fail to be obedient to this arrangement for his relief, will be counted unworthy of receiving any more favor of God and will go into the second death. Evidently, however, the Apostle is not here considering what will happen at the end of the Millennial age, and we merely mention it incidentally to show the wide scope of the comparison between Moses and Christ.

The Apostle is not applying this text, however, to the world, but to the church. All the context shows that he is addressing the church, those who have been begotten of the holy Spirit, those whose sins have been covered by the imputation of Christ's righteousness and who, in the strength of that covering, are justified, have presented their bodies living sacrifices. For what purpose do we thus make consecration? It is in answer to our Lord's invitation to drink of his "cup": to be baptized into his death; to suffer with him as members of his body, that we may reign with him and be his members on the plane of glory, members of the spiritual Israel, the spiritual seed of Abraham, for the great work of blessing natural Israel and through natural Israel, all the families of the earth.

So, then, the Apostle, in bringing this matter to our attention, is discussing the church and what will happen if any of us—not any of us who have merely turned from sin, and have realized that Christ is the great Atoner for our sins—no, but those of us who have been justified through faith in his blood and have been sanctified—those of us who should then fall away.

We remember that on the night of our Lord's institution of the last Supper, the same night in which he was betrayed, when he took the cup he said, "This cup is my blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." God's intention regarding this blood, as the blood that will seal the New Covenant, is that it should be efficacious to the remission of all the sins of Adam and his children. This was the purpose, the object for which our Lord's blood was shed. "This is my blood," not your blood. It is the blood or life that I am giving, that I consecrated when I was begotten, and that I am to relinquish today upon the cross (for it was then the same day or part of the same day in which he was crucified). This which is mine today—the blood that will seal the New Covenant between God and men—I invite you to participate in. "Drink ye all of it." All of you drink of it and drink all of it. Leave none. The invitation to participate in this blood, this cup, is never to be given to any other people or class but you—you who are specially called for this purpose. Not only you Apostles to whom I speak, but all those who shall believe on me through your word, and who similarly shall make this consecration and undertake to be baptized into my death, I invite to drink of my cup.

The Apostle asks concerning this cup of which we participate in the communion, "Is it not the participation of the blood of Christ?" (1 Cor. 10:16) We answer, Yes. Is not the blood of Christ the blood of the New Covenant? Are we not, therefore, participating in the blood of the New Covenant? In the participation, therefore, in that blood, by the invitation of our Lord, are we not sharers in his "cup" and all that pertains to it? Yes. What does this mean to us? A great deal. We should be very thankful for the great privilege we have been accorded to share in his "cup," to be "baptized into his death." As the Apostle Paul declares in the third chapter of

Philippians, I count all things as loss that I might win Christ; that I might have fellowship in his suffering; that I might be baptized into his death; share his "cup" of suffering; so should we. Paul counted every other interest and consideration as of no value in comparison with this great privilege of the Gospel age, which is accorded us.

Now, if we should ever lose sight of this wonderful privilege, if we should ever come to the place where we fail to appreciate the fact that we have been invited to share in our Lord's "cup," have been invited to participate with him in this blood of the New Covenant, this blood which is to ratify, to seal the New Covenant, it would be doing despite to all these privileges and favors which have been specially given to us, but never given to any other people in the world and never will be given again, a great privilege never offered to the angels, but offered only to the Lord Jesus Christ himself, and those who would have his spirit during this age.

If, then, we lose our appreciation of that "cup" and say that it is only an ordinary thing, only such as all nominal Christians have thought it to be: only turning away from sin and trying to live an upright life: it is not a special sacrifice: it is not a participation in the blood of Christ at all, nor drinking of his "cup," then we are despising and rejecting all the privileges that were offered to us specially, above those offered to any other people. It would signify that we had despised the whole arrangement and that something was wrong with our hearts—providing, however, we did it intentionally, willingly, knowingly, after we had seen that this is the privilege of sacrifice, after we had known that we were accepted as members of Christ, to "suffer with him, that we might also reign with him."

For all such as have ever had this clearer knowledge and appreciation, to turn away is to reject this "blood of the covenant," and to do despite to it, and to fail to use the privileges offered. In undertaking to use these privileges they had first, of necessity, to make the sacrifice of the earthly nature. It therefore follows that there is nothing left for them, for they have scorned the new nature and the Lord's provisions which are obtainable only through participation in the sacrifice of Christ. No opportunity for restitution is left them. Hence the only thing for them is that which is appropriate for those who despise God's arrangement after they have once understood it, and that is the second death.

The "sorer punishment" mentioned by the Apostle (Heb. 10:29) is the "sin unto death." Are we competent to point out who have committed that sin? For our own part we would prefer not to exercise judgment in the matter, but merely to say that such judgment is for the Lord. We will not make any decision until we see the Lord's judgment.

The Apostle says that we are not to judge one another. If, for instance, you should say, I believe that Jesus died and that he is our Redeemer, but I have lost that idea which I once had of our being invited to become dead with him; to share with him in his suffering at the present time and later the glory that shall follow—should we then say to you, Oh, you have committed the sin unto death; you have despised the blood of the covenant wherewith you have been sanctified, and therefore, having no restitution privileges to go back to, you have practically gone unto the second death condition? We answer, No. We do not understand that it would be for us to judge you or to decide respecting you, because we do not know to what extent your previous declarations were true. We do not know that you ever understood what you were doing when you thought that you had made a full consecration. Perhaps you did not understand yourself. Therefore, we prefer to say that since we are not sure in the matter it is not for us to judge. However, we are to remember what the Scriptures say in this connection, "The Lord will judge his people." If, therefore, we should see that, after you had rejected the blood of the Covenant by which you have been sanctified or specially set apart as a sacrifice, as a member of the body, God had turned you aside apparently and had withdrawn all light from you and had thrust you out of his favor, to the extent that we could see this, we would be justified in saying to ourselves at least, whether we mentioned it to another or not, that the Lord was dealing with you.

We cannot imagine that if anyone would reject the Lord

in any sense of the word it would still leave him in the light of truth. We must understand that if anyone rejects the Lord, the light of truth will gradually pass from him, and he will see no more than many do, no more than a nominal church-goer or any worldly person. Such passing into outer-darkness is a sign that the Lord's favor has been lost. To what extent it has been lost we might not wish to determine, but if, in conjunction with this, there is manifested the character of the adversary, the spirit of Satan—anger, malice, hatred, envy,

strife—then we should conclude that the Spirit of the Lord had left and that the loser was dead—"twice dead, plucked up by the roots."—Jude 12.

It would not be worth while to pray longer for such a one, especially after we had done all in our power. God is willing to do all that can be done, but he has certain fixed laws and principles, and if anyone has once enjoyed these and then scorned them, the Lord would not change his principles for any prayers, even though offered carefully with tears.

THE FAITH SEED AND THE LAW SEED

"Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the Law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all."—Rom. 4:16.

Paul has elsewhere shown that there is but the one Seed of Abraham (Christ) in the chief or special sense, in the highest sense. And he tells us that it is our privilege and "calling" to be members of the body of Christ. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." We who are not Abraham's seed according to the flesh, are thus counted as Abraham's seed because of our faith and because we become members of the spiritual seed. We are not to suppose that this is trifling with language and that the Lord would say "Abraham's seed" and then accept as Abraham's seed those who are not his seed, who are not of his posterity at all. That would be to make his language delusive and ensnaring and deceptive. It must be, therefore, that our Lord Jesus is the "seed of Abraham," not only according to the flesh, but that he is also the seed of Abraham according to the Spirit, on a higher plane than his fleshly relationship to Abraham; and it is on this higher plane that we are members of our Lord's body. We are members of him as new creatures; we are members of the Christ Spiritual, and not of the Man Christ Jesus.

It is important, therefore, for us to see how Jesus became the spiritual seed of Abraham, and to see that he was not the spiritual seed of Abraham and could not have fulfilled those conditions as the Man Christ Jesus. For instance: God promised that "in the seed of Abraham all the families of the earth should be blessed"; but the Man Jesus could not bless the world after the manner that God had implied—could not give them eternal life. He could not give it to them because he did not have any more eternal life than he needed for himself. The only way in which he would be able to give eternal life would be according to the divine plan, viz., that he lay down his earthly life in accordance with the divine arrangements and will; that God would then give him, as a reward for this obedience, the higher nature, the divine nature, with its glory and honor on the higher plane, and that this would leave him in possession of the earthly rights which he had as a man and which he did not forfeit by disobedience. It would leave him these as an asset or fund of blessing, to give to mankind.

THE SPIRITUAL SEED

So, then, the only way in which our Lord could be the Seed of Abraham to bless all the families of the earth would be as a new creature, the new creature Christ Jesus. The new creature on the spiritual plane has a gift to bestow and mankind on the earthly plane is needing this very blessing which he has to give. And it is this spiritual Christ of whom we are invited to become members—this great Mediator. And in order for us or for any Jew to become members of this spiritual Christ, this spiritual seed of Abraham, one thing is necessary; viz., not a certain earthly relationship to Christ or a certain earthly relationship to Abraham, but a begetting of the holy Spirit to this same spiritual nature that Christ possesses. Whoever, therefore, through the merit of Christ, is enabled to offer his body a living sacrifice, acceptable to God, and does this, will get the promised reward to the same nature that Christ possesses—will become a member of his spiritual body. Hence this Spiritual Seed may be comprised of people of the natural seed of Abraham and of those not of his natural seed, as in our case. We who are Gentiles are now becoming members of the spiritual seed of Abraham, but we could not become members of the natural seed; we were never such.

As the Apostle intimates in this text, it is the divine purpose to have two seeds of Abraham; one of them the spiritual seed, to which we have just referred, and the other the natural seed of Abraham. The one of these, he says, is developed according to the spirit, according to grace, favor. We do not come into this relationship through the Law, but we come into it through participation with Christ. It is the favor of being permitted to present our bodies living sacrifices, acceptable to our Redeemer, of having this sacrifice accepted by God and of having a share in the reward. This is the favor or grace which

now comes to us as the spiritual seed, in which we have participation to the extent of our faithfulness to the Lord.

This is the seed, then, that we find represented by the "stars of heaven." The other seed of Abraham is likened unto the "sands of the sea." This Scripture tells us this seed, the earthly seed of Abraham, is a seed that will be developed under the Law. We know from the same Apostle's writings that this Law could not be the Law that God instituted with the Jews at the hands of Moses. That Law did not bring any of them everlasting life. It did not bring forth any of the seed of Abraham to perfection.

How, then, shall we understand the Apostle in connection with this statement, that some of the seed are to be of the Law, when the Law could make nothing perfect? We answer that he was here pointing back to that Law Covenant which was instituted through Moses, and in the other expression he is pointing forward to the Law Covenant of the future, which will be instituted at the end of this Gospel age, and which is called the New [Law] Covenant. It will be the same as the one just referred to, but it will have a better mediator, one who will be able to give eternal life and all the blessings God intended for them and promised. We see, then, according to other Scriptures, that all the nations will have the privilege of coming in under this New [Law] Covenant arrangement, of which Christ is the Mediator and of which we are becoming members, so that by the end of the Millennial age, his Seed will include all the saved on the human plane. All will get eternal life who shall comply with the conditions—"the number of whom will be as the sands of the seashore for multitude."

Hence this statement, "that which is of the law, and that which is of grace," refers to those who are now the spiritual seed of Abraham through grace, and to those who will become the seed of Abraham under the New Covenant arrangement during the Millennial age by obedience to the law under the better Mediator than Moses, under the great antitypical Moses, Christ the Head and the church his body, whom God is now raising up during this Gospel age. He raised up the Head eighteen centuries ago. The body will soon be fully raised up and joined to the Head in glory.

THE EARTHLY SEED

While the ancient worthies will be a separate and distinct class from the remainder of mankind, and while they are to have a special reward for their faith, in that they will "have a better resurrection," will come forth from the tomb in full human perfection; nevertheless, they will be under the Law, because there seem to be only two ways by which any could be brought into harmony with God. First, there will be those who sacrifice the earthly interests in the present time and are begotten to the spirit nature and are thus counted in as members of the spiritual seed; and secondly, those who will come in under the New [Law] Covenant, of which the spiritual seed will be the Mediator. As Abraham and the other ancient worthies cannot be included in the Spiritual Seed, the only place to put them, logically, is with the natural seed; and that they were not begotten to the spiritual nature is clearly evidenced by our Lord's words when he said of John the Baptist, "There hath not arisen a greater Prophet than John the Baptist, but the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." He thus clearly marked the dividing line between those in the kingdom class and those who cannot be in that class, however great they may be. We must understand, therefore, that the ancient worthies, in their perfection, will be subject to the rules and regulations of the Millennial kingdom and from the very start will have the full perfection of all that the remainder of mankind will be able to attain during the Millennium. That special privilege will be a reward for the faith they manifested, and will gain for them participation in the kingdom work, to be agents of the spiritual class and to

attain the perfection of the human nature instantly, instead of having to climb up gradually out of imperfection, as will the remainder of the world of mankind.

As we have already suggested, we think there are statements in the Scriptures which imply that God intends ultimately to give them a place on the spiritual plane, but we see

no way in which they can come to that plane under the arrangements thus far outlined in the Word of God, up to the completion of the Millennial age. It is our thought, however, that instead of becoming members of the bride of Christ, their place will be rather with the "great company," serving before the throne, and not seated in the throne.

GOING OUTSIDE THE CAMP

"Let us go unto him, without the camp, bearing the reproach with him."—Heb. 13:13.

Israel had become God's people in a particular sense, and had indicated their desire to be his people before they came into this "camp" condition; and the "camp" and all of the arrangement of the tribes and their relationship to the Tabernacle were significant of this fact. Nevertheless, they were not in accord with God, because of their imperfection. Hence, in order for them to remain in covenant relationship with God, it was necessary for the priests to offer the Atonement Day sacrifices.

The camp typified what now is a fact and partly a condition that will obtain during the Millennial age. At that time many of the world of mankind will be desirous of being in accord with God—that is, in their hearts, they will prefer to be right rather than wrong; they will prefer to be in accord rather than out of accord; and this picture of the "camp," we understand, represents all who will ultimately come into accord, all who will ultimately wish for righteousness and will desire to do God's will.

THE CAMP IN ANTITYPE

The "camp" condition at the present time, however, we could not think would represent the world in the broad sense, but rather the worldly church. It would represent those who with more or less desire wish to be in accord with God and who profess his name, but through ignorance or superstition or love of the world are not in the proper attitude of heart to receive the deep things of God, the spiritual things, at the time in which this spiritual work, the work of Atonement, is being carried on. We do not understand that these were ever begotten of the Spirit. They are merely moral, or outward Christians—the Christian world—Christendom. These, we understand, are now represented in the camp condition. In our Lord's day the camp condition did not represent Christendom, but the Jewish nation. It did not include Gentiles at all—the world in that sense of the word—but merely the Jewish nation, which typically represented all those who will desire to come into accord with God.

In his day, therefore, our Lord did not go outside to the Gentiles, and in speaking of the world he did not mean the heathen. When he said, "Marvel not if the world hate you; it hated me before it hated you," he was speaking of the world from the standpoint of natural Israel. The heathen were not taken into account, not having had sufficient knowledge to determine whether they would or would not be God's people.

But during this Gospel age the camp does not consist of the Jewish people because matters have changed. The camp today represents Christendom. For our Lord in his day to have gone outside the camp would have been to go outside the nominal church system of his time and to do the will of the Father irrespective of their support; and for us now to follow him thus outside the camp would be to go outside of the present environments, viz., outside of Christendom, in the sense of ignoring the views and teachings, the approval, the snares, of Christendom. It would mean to go outside of their favor, outside of their influence and social position. The camp condition here does not represent people who are aliens in the sense of being evil-intentioned or of wilfully rejecting God, but those who make some outward show and claim of being God's people.

Some might be inclined to ask why could it be understood with this view of the matter, that the Day of Atonement sacrifices, the sacrifices of this Gospel age, are "in behalf of all the people," the entire world of mankind?

We answer that they are for all the people, in the sense that all people will have the opportunity of availing themselves of the privileges of these sacrifices, of the benefits derived therefrom; but, strictly speaking, they will not be for all the people, because they will be applicable only to those who will become, in the Millennial age, true Israelites. If any one refuses the opportunity of becoming of the "seed of Abraham" he will not get any benefit from the Atonement; he will be refusing his share of the ransom by refusing to come under the arrangement that will then obtain—that will then be opened up by the great Mediator. Just as in Israel's time, if there were any Gentiles who desired to become Jewish proselytes and who would conform to the terms and conditions appertaining to the joining of the Jewish nation, they might become Israelites with the privileges of an Israelite; but if any declined those terms and conditions, then such failed to become Israelites, failed to get any of the blessings that were under the Mosaic law. And similarly during the Millennial age: Any one who will refuse to come under the terms and conditions of the New Covenant, and to come into relationship with the Mediator, will fail to get the blessings, fail to get the restitution, and all the privileges that will come through restitution, and consequently will fail to gain eternal life.

In view of this answer the question may arise, In what sense do the nominal church system of today and the nominal church system of our Lord's day constitute a picture of that class which will be dealt with under the New Covenant arrangements of the future, as the people of God, the Israel of God, the camp class?

BLINDED BY IGNORANCE AND SUPERSTITION

We answer that because these people, the Jews in their day, and nominal Christians today, profess a desire to be in accord with God, profess to be his people, profess to desire to do his will, they are properly representative of this class who during the Millennial age will be desirous of doing God's will. The people are now, through the various false theologies and the great adversary's misleading, mistaught doctrines of devils instead of the truth; traditions of elders instead of the Word of God. Men are now misinformed, but at that time they will hear the Lord's message and there will be no misunderstanding. The Lord "will turn unto the people a pure language," a pure message—so different from the teaching of the present time—no intermingling of Babylonish errors with truth.

Our supposition is that today any one, other than a hypocrite, who is professing to be of the church of Christ, would really desire to serve the interests of the truth if he knew the truth. Similarly the Jews in our Lord's day: Had they not been blinded by error and superstition, the majority, we suppose, would have preferred to be right rather than wrong. This is borne out by Peter's declaration when, on the Day of Pentecost, realizing that they and others of the nation had crucified the Messiah, he said, "I wot, brethren, that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." The majority were not opposed, but they were ignorant, and the true light had not as yet shone upon them. When this class in the future shall have been brought under the influence of the true light, we may expect that they will not be in opposition, but under the enlightenment then granted will become subjects of God's grace and will reach perfection; and all who will endure the testing at the end of the Millennial age, when Satan shall be loosed for a little season to try the nations, will come unto life eternal, under the terms which God has provided.

God's ways are not our ways, his thoughts are not as ours;
He wounds us sore with cruel thorns, where we have stopped
for flowers;

But oh! from the oft-pierced heart those precious drops distil,
That many a life, else all unblest, with healing balm shall fill.
Then give, O give, the flower to those who pray it so may be,
But I would choose to have the thorns, with thee, dear Lord,
with thee.

Man judgeth man in ignorance, he seeth but in part:
Our trust is in our Maker, God, who searcheth every heart.
And every wrong and every woe, when put beneath our feet,
As stepping-stones may help us on to his high mercy seat.
Then teach us still to smile, O Lord, though sharp the stones
may be,
Remembering that they bring us near to thee, dear Lord, to
thee.

WHAT LAW WAS WEAK?

"For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."—Rom. 8:3.

The law here and in other passages evidently refers to the Law Covenant. It is not supposable, for instance, that God's law is weak or that the Apostle meant anything of that kind. In what respect, then, was the Law Covenant weak? It was weak or incompetent in that it did not bring about the desired object. That object was to bring the people who were under the Law Covenant into full harmony, covenant relationship, with God—where they would be perfect; where they would have a right to enjoy eternal life and all the blessings that God has for the perfect. Since the Law Covenant did not accomplish that result, and could not, it was weak. It was inefficient in a sense; not weak in the sense of being defective, but weak in the sense of being ineffective. If we should look for the particular features of weakness we would find them connected with the flesh. Had mankind been in proper condition to profit by it; if all the Jews had been in that condition which would have enabled them to obey God, then all would have had life by obedience to that law. Every willing and every obedient one of them, having perfect abilities in his flesh, would have been able to commend himself to God and

would have been acceptable—in covenant relationship, which would have included eternal life.

"What the law could not do in that it was inefficient, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh"—in the likeness of flesh of sin, or the flesh that was condemned because of sin, and for sin, or on account of the sin condition, sin in the flesh—proved that sin in the flesh is not a necessary thing, as the Jews evidently had come to believe, seeing that they strove to keep God's law and yet did not attain to perfection. One way of reasoning on the matter (probably many of the Jews did so) would be that the law was too hard; that the law was too severe. It then became, when our Lord Jesus came, a question whether the law that God gave was so severe that no one could keep it; whether anyone could be justified by it; or whether the law was all right and whether the condition of man was all wrong. Our Lord, by virtue of his keeping the law, condemned sin, thus showing that it was not the law that was at fault, but the sinner. Thus by keeping the law Jesus showed that it was within the range of a perfect man to keep that law and to stand approved of God.

"THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE"

MATTHEW 12:22-32, 38-42.—MAY 15.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."—V. 30.

Sometimes on a battlefield it would appear as though each man were fighting for himself. All battle lines seem lost in the confusion; yet in the end the victory will show the same clear-cut distinctions that prevailed in the beginning of the battle. According to the Great Teacher the entire human family is either on one side or on the other side of a great battle between right and wrong, truth and error, God and Satan. There is no doubt whatever as to how the battle will end—God will have the victory. Indeed the Bible assures us that at any time he could quickly put an end to the conflict, deliver his saints, overthrow Satan and his empire, etc. The divine promise is that this will be done in God's "due time"—when the church will be completed and changed by the power of the first resurrection, and the time shall come for the establishment of Messiah's Millennial kingdom for the blessing of all the nations.

Is it asked why the long delay of now six thousand years that sin has triumphed, two thousand of this since Messiah died for the redemption of sinners and their release from the death sentence? The answer is that during these nineteen centuries those whom he has favored with some knowledge of his will—testing their loyalty to him, to his Law, to his representatives—he is testing because he seeks to find amongst those professing loyalty, such as have the principles of righteousness at heart. Our present study shows how some at the first advent were thus tested and we know that throughout these nineteen centuries the experiences of the footstep followers of the Nazarene have been similar to his own. Frequently they have been hated without cause—maligned, misunderstood, slandered—sometimes by fellow-religionists of honorable standing. In every such instance we are to remember that there are two sides to the conflict—the side of God, truth, righteousness, and the side of error, falsehood, Satan.

EVERY TEST TWOFOLD

As we see how blindly scribes and Pharisees and Doctors of the Law hated Jesus and said all manner of evil against him, we perceive that really they were on Satan's side. As we see Saul of Tarsus stoning Stephen to death and others persecuting followers of Jesus, we see clearly that they were in Satan's service, deluded by him and, in some instances, we are assured that these servants of Satan and unrighteousness verily thought that they did God service. Let us therefore be on guard along these lines, remembering the words of the Great Teacher, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "He that is not for me is against me." "He that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Alas, how many noble people have unwittingly been on the wrong side of the great controversy—fighting against God and the truth, ignorantly deluded by the adversary. By permitting this conflict and the measure of darkness, God is the more effectively trying, testing, those whom he has called to be his people. Not only are we tried directly as to the side we will take, but in a secondary sense we are tried as respects our humanity. Those who are honest of heart and who make the mistake of fighting against God, when their eyes are opened, have a great test of humility in the matter of confession of their error and becoming zealous for the truth.

Those who are on the right side have also a test of humility, that they be not puffed up by their victory, but "humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt them in due time."

Satan, because created on a higher plane, is styled the Prince of demons in his relationship to the fallen angels. Judge of the delusion in the hearts of the Pharisees which prompted them to charge the Master with being Satan himself and, on this score, accounted for his power to cast out demons! The Master took the time to philosophize with them on this subject and to show that if the time had come when Satan would work against his own associates and servants it would imply the speedy fall of his empire. He also pointed out that demons had been cast out by some whom they acknowledged and honored. If he must be Beelzebub to cast out the demons, what would their logic be in respect to their neighbors and friends who at times had exercised this power! On the other hand, if he, by God's power cast out demons, it was an evidence that God's kingdom was nigh, just as he had proclaimed.

WILFUL SINS UNFORGIVABLE

Having thus answered their objection he showed that they were against him and opposing his Word and that this meant that if he were God's representative, they were opposing God. Then he called their attention to the fact that their words were blasphemous in that they attributed God's spirit, God's power in him, to Satan's power. Since they did this without any real provocation and in opposition to every evidence, it implied that they were wicked at heart. Ordinary sins resulting from the fall, ignorance, superstition, etc., would all, in God's providence, be ultimately forgivable, but a wilful sin against light, against knowledge, would be a sin against God's spirit. And for that sin there would be no forgiveness, either in this Age, or in the coming age—either during this Gospel age or in the Millennial age. If the sin were committed against full light, its merit or punishment would be destruction, second death. But very evidently it would be such a sin to only a few. With the majority there would be a mixture of wilfulness with ignorance, and, if so, the proportion of wrong represented by the ignorance could be forgiven; but the proportion represented by the wilfulness would need to be punished, because unforgivable.

The scribes and Pharisees, envious of his popularity, asked for a sign, a proof of his Messiahship—not recognizing his teachings and his miracles as proofs sufficient. He then told them of one sign which would come to them too late—his stay in the tomb would correspond to Jonah's stay in the belly of the great fish. The people of heathen Nineveh in the judgment age, in the Millennial age, he assured them, would rank higher than they, for the Ninevites did repent at the preaching of Jonah, while these repented not at the preaching of a greater than Jonah. The Queen of Sheba had journeyed afar to hear Solomon's wisdom; yet these who were in the presence of a greater than Solomon realized it not and heeded not his message. Let us not be thus blinded, but, with our whole hearts, accept and follow the Nazarene!

THE POWER OF A WOMAN

GOLDEN TEXT:—"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."—Proverbs 16:32.

John the Baptist, because of his boldness and courage as a servant and mouth-piece of God, was a thorn in the side of King Herod and his courtiers and the great of that day. Herod and the high priests and the more prominent people considered John the Baptist and Jesus fanatics. Doubtless they would have made away with them quickly, had it not been for their fears of the people. The common people heard the Master gladly and declared that "never man spake like this man"; the same common people believed John to be a prophet.

We will not undertake to say whether John exceeded his commission or not when he reproved the King and Queen. As a rule, however, we believe it to be the wiser plan for Christian ministers to speak forth the Word of God fearlessly and plainly, without attempting personal application—allowing each hearer to apply the message to his own heart. Herodias fortunately represents an uncommon class of women. She was governed by boundless ambition. She married the man who, for a time, seemed in line for promotion to a kingly position. But when the title was given by the Roman Emperor to his brother, Herod Antipas, she inveigled the latter by her charms and, deserting her husband, became Herodias the "Queen." John the Baptist, while fearlessly denouncing sin, felt led to make a personal application of his teachings to King Herod.

Some have assumed that Herod had requested John the Baptist to visit the palace and give a talk on the reforms he advocated, and that, in this connection, the Prophet pointed out the error of the King's conduct, saying that it was not in harmony with the divine law that he was living with his brother Philip's wife. Herodias heard of this and realized that if the King accepted such counsel it would mean that herself and her beautiful daughter Salome, would become outcasts from the palace and be without a home, as it would be impossible for her to return to her husband, Philip. The power of Herodias over the King led to John's imprisonment. Her next move was to effect his death, for she realized her position insecure so long as he lived. John's fearless speech might yet influence the King.

This ambitious, wicked, artful woman plotted murder, and the King's birthday celebration was her opportunity. She forwarded the arrangements for a great banquet, at which were present the nobles and princes of the land. Wine was in plentiful supply. She well knew that the wine would inflame the passions and relax the moral tone of the company. So she had her beautiful daughter, Salome, specially prepared and attired, and instructed her to perform one of the obscene dances common to the East on such occasions, but not commonly indulged in except by the lower classes, and never by princesses. The occasion was to be a rare one. It was intended to influence the King exactly as it did—to admiration and a boastful offer to the girl of any gift she would ask. The plan succeeded to the letter. The King's words were, "Ask of me a gift, even to the half of my kingdom"—possibly a suggestion of his willingness to make her his true Queen.

Following her mother's instructions, Salome reported the matter at once, inquiring of the mother what gifts she should request. We can better imagine than describe the surprise of

the girl when told by the mother to request "the head of John the Baptist on a platter." We may conceive what a disappointment this would mean; what visions of the beautiful and precious things it would destroy!—with what surprise Salome must have asked as to why this gruesome gift should be given. We can imagine the mother hissing to her that the death of John the Baptist was the most necessary thing in the world for them both—that without it any day might see them hurled from conditions of affluence into the abyss of degradation and poverty. We can imagine her saying, "This, Salome, is the priceless gift which you must ask from the King." And the power of the woman over both the King and the daughter was wonderfully exemplified in the result. Salome went gaily again amongst the company of nobles whom she had charmed, and in a loud voice accepted the king's offer of whatever she would chose, even to the half of his kingdom, and stated that accordingly, the gift should be the head of the Prophet on a platter.

The King's conscience was not quite dead. He was grieved; but his pride as well as his subserviency to Herodias controlled him. He reasoned that for a King to give his word of honor in the hearing of nobles and princes and then to repudiate it, would be to him a lasting shame. Ah, what an illustration of how "the fear of man bringeth a snare"! What a lesson we read in this!—that a man's first responsibility is to his God and to his conscience, whatever the cost. Tradition has it that Herod was haunted with fear the remainder of his days. It is in line with this that when he heard of Jesus and his mighty works, he expressed the conviction that somehow, the spirit or power of John had passed to Jesus.

Our lesson brings before us two strong and two weak characters. John and Herodias were strong characters, the one for the right and for God, the other for selfish ambition and sinful indulgence of it. The one swayed his nation for their good and prepared the worthy remnant to receive Messiah's message. The other swayed the King and her daughter to infamy, murder and disgrace, and terribly blackened her own character. John's reward lies in the future, when he, as a member of the Ancient Worthies class, will come forth to a "better resurrection"—to be associated with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the earthly phase of the Millennial kingdom.

Herodias, surely continuously unhappy, finally persuaded the King to a course which led to his banishment, in which she shared. Her future, according to the Bible, will be a resurrection to shame and lasting contempt. (Daniel 12:2) Inasmuch as she degraded herself and missed grand opportunities, we may assuredly know that she will come forth in the Millennium greatly handicapped by her improper course in the present life. It may take centuries, even under the favorable conditions of Christ's kingdom, for such a deeply-dyed character to purge itself of the shame and the lasting contempt and to rise gradually to true nobility and human perfection, or, failing so to do, to die the second death.

THE BINDING OF "THE STRONG MAN"

"And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years."—Rev. 20:2.

We believe that there is a personal Devil and that he will be literally restrained in some manner; but in the expression in the above text it seems that the names "Devil" and "Satan" refer not merely to the person of the adversary, but to all that system of things of which he has stood as the representative or head or center; for instance, in Revelation 12:7-9, a great religious system is apparently spoken of as the Devil.

As to when this binding began, and how it will proceed, and when it will end, the Lord's parable respecting the binding of the "strong man" seems to imply that it will begin in a sudden manner. He says that if that "strong man" knew at what time the thief would come he would watch and not suffer his house to be broken up. He thus intimates that Satan would not know at what time the catastrophe would come upon him and his arrangements and that therefore he would be taken somewhat at a disadvantage.

As to what constitutes the "house" of this "strong man" would be another matter. His "house" here would stand for his household, which at the present time would include the fallen angels. These fallen angels, who have been subject to Satan as their prince, will in some sense of the word be thrown out of harmony with him. The time at which we might

expect this would be in the second presence of our Lord, and it would seem that, from about the time of our Lord's *parousia*, disorder began to operate in Satan's household and that these different endeavors that we see in many quarters to carry out certain schemes more or less antagonistic the one to the other, might be the result of this disorganization. It would further seem that there are different bands of evil spirits working upon humanity. These various hostile bands may work a great deal of havoc, perhaps equally as much as could have been done had they all remained in organized relationship to Satan himself. But still the undermining or overthrow of his authority, seems to be in progress. We believe that every advance step of light and knowledge is that much of a restraint upon darkness and evil and superstition. We properly enough speak of the chains of superstition, the chains of darkness, which bound mankind for a long time; and very properly we say that these are of the adversary.

Now, have we anything to indicate that light will serve as a "chain"? Did we ever hear of light being a chain? We answer that there has never yet been a manifestation of that kind. There is nothing in the past operation of light that served as a chain, but it seems that now it should operate

thus. "Whatsoever doth make manifest is light," and that which makes manifest is a "chain," is a restraint upon that which is darkness. So here are the two—light and darkness; the Prince of Light and the prince of darkness. The Prince of Light has only recently invaded, as it were, the land of the prince of darkness to commence his work. This work is first, chiefly in the church and in the restraining of the "winds" and the "powers," and the troubles coming upon the world; but meantime the whole world is getting awake, not necessarily to the light of truth, but getting awake to the chains of darkness which are upon them and of which they are striving to rid themselves. We might notice as an example the Higher Critics and Agnostics in large numbers in the high places. Many of the most intelligent people of the whole world have arrayed themselves, not on the side of Satan to do some evil work, but in opposition to all the darkness and blindness. They have not, indeed, the "true light" as we have it, but they are exercising an influence that is antagonistic to the darkness that Satan has heretofore used for the restraint of thought, etc. We will not say that Satan is not operating to quite an extent through these various evil agencies, but we do believe that these agencies are not willingly being operated upon by Satan; but, they go to another extreme and he seeks, as far as he is able, to corral them again and hold them with some other form of error.

It seems to be clear that in this time in which we are living, and since the presence of the Lord, great influences have been let loose in the world that are breaking many of the shackles of superstition and ignorance. These influences are not merely those that are being exerted amongst the consecrated, but we refer chiefly to those influences which are being exerted amongst those with whom we cannot be in accord—the "Higher Critic" class. We believe they are doing a great deal to restrain the adversary and his authority over the people, etc.

In connection with the binding of Satan we read that he shall be "bound for a thousand years, that he might deceive the nations no more till the thousand years be finished"—implying that deception was one of the main things in which he had been previously engaged and that henceforth he would be so restrained or disabled, whether by the light of "present truth," or by light of science, or whatever it might be, that he

would not be able to deceive the world in the same manner as formerly.

We believe that the restraining of his influence is in operation. As we look about the world we see that many of the various inventions, etc., are apparently being put to good use. The telephone, the telegraph, etc., for instance, are not generally used for wicked purposes. They are used for good purposes, or at least for business purposes. In many cases where the attempt has been made to use the telephone and telegraph for gambling, the State laws have stepped in and forbidden the use of wires for such purpose. In respect to the temperance question, also, we see that enlightenment is proceeding and people are making rapid advancement in the knowledge that alcoholic liquors are dangerous.

And so the education of the world goes rapidly on. People are no longer allowed to be vicious or idle. Children are compelled to attend school; the truant officer looks them up if they are derelict. The knowledge that is spreading is wonderful. And the thought that practically all this is being accomplished by the world itself, and that we have little or nothing to do with it, makes it appear still more wonderful. This work is being done by people who do not believe in the true religion; they do not know God aright; the majority of them, so far as we can gauge their own testimony, repudiate the Bible. They believe in a vague way in a God of some kind, perhaps in a fanciful God, found in every stone and piece of wood. Nevertheless they are free from the shackles of the darkness of the past and apparently have no desire to go back, but forward. It would appear, then, that all of the things peculiar to our day in the way of restraining error are part of the binding of the adversary. We may be doing our little mite by advertising sermons, giving out literature, etc.

As to the question when the great adversary's binding will be accomplished, we believe that it will not be brought about until the time that the "great company" class is completed. It would not surprise us if Satan would make a great commotion in the world all through the time of trouble. It does not seem that all that terrible trouble will come about without the adversary. We think he would enjoy being in the fray, such as we expect it to be—world wide, "when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ."

MY TRUSTFUL OBEDIENCE

"Child of mine, I love thee;
Listen now to me
And make answer truly
While I question thee;
For I see that shadows
Do thy soul oppress
And thy faith so weaken
That I cannot bless.

"Thou hast craved my power
And presence in thy soul;
Wilt thou yield thee wholly
Unto my control?
Wilt thou let me ever
With thee have my way?
Yield thyself in all things
Simply to obey?

"Though my presence oft-times
Seems to be withdrawn—
Of my inward workings
Not a trace he shown—
Wilt thou count me present
Notwithstanding all?
Still believe I'm ever
Working in thy soul?

"When I give to others
What I to thee deny—
Fold them in my sunshine,
Seem to pass thee by—
Wilt thou still believe in
My strong love for thee;
Yield thee to my purpose
Whatsoever it be?

"When I to thy pleadings
Seem no heed to pay,
And thy foes grow bolder,
Claim thee as their prey;
Though towards thee I'm silent,
Wilt thou stand the test?
On my word of promise
Lay thee down to rest?

"If to all my questions
Thou canst answer, 'Yes,'
Thou shalt be forever
One that I love best.
To the inner circle
Of my favored few
Thou shalt be admitted
And my glory view."

THE FULFILMENT OF PROPHECY

Respecting the fulfilment of prophecy it seems to be natural for us, and for all humanity, to be impatient and to expect things to be done more rapidly than they usually come to pass. We had expected a Federation of the churches and the giving of life to the Federation by the Episcopal system by the beginning of this century and now we are ten years beyond this period. This is a delay as respects our expectations, but we may be sure that there is no delay in the matter as respects the divine intention. Our expectations are wonderfully fulfilled, however, inasmuch as it was true that when we

first began to tell about the coming Federation of the various church and system of Protestantism the matter was pooh-poohed by all Protestants, who were free to declare that there was nothing of the kind contemplated and nothing of the kind desired; that they were really better off in a divided condition, because in that way there was a certain competition. This was the same argument once used by business people, to the effect that competition was the life of trade; but in business they are finding out that combination is the life of trade, and profit and trusts are the result. And so in our re-

ligious circles the same thought is brought forward, and the tendency today is strongly in favor of the Federation which the Scriptures indicate and which we pointed out more than thirty years ago was coming, and which will result in a great blight upon Christianity in many respects.

Apparently, at first, the prospective Federation will mean great prosperity and great progress and will give great outward appearance of piety and it will seem as though the world is now to be converted. All who will not or cannot see it thus will be considered as obstreperous and out of accord, and as unreasonable, pessimists and hinderers of the public good by those who think that this is the divine arrangement and proper course and who do not see as do we the result. This is the very condition of things that the Lord guards his people against, by saying, "Say ye not a confederacy (a Federation) to all to whom this people shall say a confederacy, neither fear ye their fear nor be afraid." The fear of all the different denominations seems to be that unless something is done, unless something of this kind be brought about, the whole religious system will go to pieces and God's purposes will fail of being legitimately accomplished. We are not to fear thus, and we do not so fear.

We realize that there is a difference between the nominal church and the real church of Christ; that God's real saints are to be found in all denominations and outside of all denominations, and that he will perfect his glorious plan of selecting the church to be the spiritual seed of Abraham. The divine plan will thus be worked out entirely aside from the projects of man to convert the world, which we see to be impossible; not that we are in opposition to anything and everything possible to be done for the heathen, but that we are not putting our confidence in these efforts for the glorious outcome which God's Word shows us will be realized when our Lord "shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied."

But while the matter has not come along so rapidly as we might have expected, we may be sure that there is no real delay, and we have no doubt that the results will be attained in the fulness of time—God's time. There is no doubt that this prophecy will be found in full accord with the other prophecies respecting the close of the Gentile Times and the inauguration of the Millennial kingdom, due in the year 1915.

Indeed, we see that the people in general are very indifferent, as yet, to the matter of Federation. It is merely the leaders and ministers of all denominations that fear the rising influence of Higher Criticism and Socialism in the deprivation of the people of their faith in God and in the Bible, and these perceive that something in the way of an outward, formal church system is necessary to take the place of individual faith and the influence of the Word of God. This is the class that is anxious for federation, and we have no doubt the time is near at hand when all the Protestant denominations, or practically all of the ministers of Protestant denominations, will be willing to receive the apostolic blessing and laying on of hands from some Episcopal Bishop, and thus be recognized by the Episcopal Bishop as having the apostolic succession and benediction. And this we understand will thereafter be considered the test as to the right to exercise any of the functions of public ministers, such as preaching, teaching, marrying, etc. Thus the people will be more and more brought to regard the Protestant ministry as Catholics already regard the Catholic ministry.

This will be the growing sentiment during the next few years, the next five years. Five years may seem to be a short time in which to accomplish great things, but we live in the age of rapidity, in the age of electricity. More results are now accomplished in one year than might have been accomplished in five years a short time ago, consequently in the next five years there will be the possibility of as large an accomplishment as twenty-five years would have brought about a short time ago—perhaps much more than that. We shall expect that, in due time, the Scriptures which indicate this

Federation will have fulfilment and clear demonstration, and that before 1915.

As respects the gathering of Israel back to Palestine: It might have seemed strange to us that the Lord did not stir up the people sooner, but we may be sure that his plans and arrangements are all right. The Zionist movement is not yet twenty years old, but it has exerted, and is now exerting, an influence over the masses of Jewish people all over the world. What more could be expected? Meantime the Lord has for some reason kept Palestine closed against the Jews by the Turkish edict and by passport restrictions; and the fact that it had been closed to them has seemed to make them all the more anxious to open the door and to go in and possess the land.

We see a marvelous manifestation of this among the masses of the Jews. In their recent conference, their very able leaders endeavored to deter them from their purpose of entering Palestine at this time—claiming that the Turkish government should give them an autonomous Jewish government before they would take any steps toward entering the land, and that if they were to go in now they would blast their own hopes and privileges and that the Turks would tax them and keep them in subjection and they never could have the opportunity of having their own form of government. But so strong was the feeling in favor of going in at once to possess the land that the arguments of the leaders were unavailing, and while feeling great respect for them they voted them down and decided that they would go in at once and that all the institutions connected with Zionism should be moved to Palestine, and their banking capital should be transferred there as rapidly as wisdom would justify. So we see the movement is gaining headway.

The thought has been held up to some extent and has gained force, and is our expectation, that the present year will be more eventful respecting Palestine than any recent preceding year. Our thought is that from now onward we may expect rapid progress there for the Jewish cause. We will go there to see regarding it, the Lord willing. The next five years may seem a short time in which to gather there Jewish people from all parts of the world, but we are to remember three things—one is that the majority of the Jews are in Russia and rapidly coming to the United States; the second is that at the present time Jews in all parts of the world, and especially in the United States, are very prosperous; third, that God does not declare that all Jews will go back to Jerusalem, but that he will gather his people, and by this we understand him to mean those who have faith in the promises made to Abraham, those who are really at heart Israelites, those who at heart are anxious to come into harmony with him and to receive his favors.

These are the ones he intends to gather there; and these will doubtless include some that are wealthy, especially as the troublous times in the next few years will indicate the insecurity of property elsewhere; and the Jews, many of them having accumulated property, will be desirous to return to Palestine, where they feel they will be more safe than in any of the large cities of civilization. We could not, of course, agree that they would be more safe there, because the Scriptures distinctly state that the trouble which will encircle the whole civilized world will reach to Palestine and will culminate there in what the Scriptures term "the time of Jacob's trouble."

"God moves in a mysterious way

His wonders to perform;

He plants his footsteps in the sea,

And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines,

Of never-failing skill,

He treasures up his bright designs,

And works his sovereign will."

ANCIENT WORTHIES—HOW PERFECTED?

A perfect body implies a perfect mind, because the mind is a part of the body, and a man who has no brains or who has only half his brains would not be a perfect man. Probably there will be no difference of thought thus far in respect to this question, but the real point at issue would be: What constitutes a perfect character?

Father Adam had, in one sense of the word, a perfect character when he was created in God's image and likeness, being perfect both in mind and in body. His mind being in the image of God his character was good; no blemish was there; no preference for sin, but the reverse of this—an appreciation of righteousness and a tendency toward it. He had not a hard

heart, but a fleshly heart—a tender heart. He would not be cruel, but just, loving and kind—all that would constitute a good man, because God made him thus.

But there is another sense in which we use the word character, a sense in which Adam never had character in full, viz., in the sense of character developed, tested and proven. God tried him, and because of his inexperience he failed, even though his character was good and his whole organism perfect. If he had known as much about God as we know, he would undoubtedly have stood the test; but had he been successful in this test respecting the eating of forbidden fruit, we have no thought that it would have been the end of his testing.

Undoubtedly other tests would have come, and gradually he would have been growing in the knowledge of God, in obedience, etc.; but lacking experience he failed in the very first feature of his trial. So the Scriptures inform us regarding our Lord Jesus as a man, that he was able to endure faithfully because of his previous knowledge of the Father.

If we suppose our Lord Jesus to have been merely a perfect man as was Adam, without any additional knowledge of God, without any appreciation of his "glory with the Father before the world was," without an insight into the divine plan given through the holy Spirit and the Word of God, we would suppose him equally as liable to failure as was Adam; but when we remember that he had these various other blessings, then we see the force of the Scripture which says, "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, when he shall bear their iniquities"—referring to the time of his consecration unto death and his crucifixion on the cross.

Our Lord had the knowledge that enabled him to see and understand in a manner impossible to Adam. In his case we see that the testing through the adversary during the forty days of fasting in the wilderness was not counted of the Father as sufficient proof of his character-perfection, but, rather, we find that "he was tempted in all points like as we are"—that for three and a half years this testing work continued. This inference is to be drawn not only from the New Testament records of our Lord's experiences, but also from the words of the Apostle, "Consider him who endureth such contradiction of sinners against himself." Again, the same thought is illustrated by the high priest who, during the time which represents our Lord's earthly ministry, was in the Holy, crumbling the incense upon the fire, thus symbolically representing the testing and proving, in every particular, of our Lord's character.

If, therefore, it was appropriate that our Lord should be tested after he was begotten, as a new creature, after he had consecrated his life even unto death, and if it is appropriate that we also should be fully tested after we become new creatures, begotten of the holy Spirit, then we might wonder in what manner the ancient worthies received any testing which would constitute a full proof of character. When we examine the records of these men—Enoch, Abraham, Moses, Samson, Daniel and others—we find that they manifested great faith; and they endured severe ordeals and testings of their loyalty to God, and their confidence in him. It does not surprise us, therefore, that the testimony "that they pleased God," was given respecting them. This assures us that they had considerable character development. God must have seen their hearts to be loyal, else he never would have considered them worthy of the "better resurrection." At the same time we believe that they will have need of further experience.

Faith seems to be the chief element of character that was developed under Samson's experiences. We do not know how much patience, long suffering, brotherly-kindness, gentleness, meekness, etc., were developed in his character; nothing is stated respecting the matter, but we have no reason to suppose that Samson was a very gentle man. The slaying of 3-

900 men with the jaw-bone of an ass as well as other experiences, would not seem to imply this. We may reasonably suppose, therefore, that though Samson will be brought back in an absolutely perfect condition, and under the favorable conditions of the Millennial age, there will probably be experiences in life that he never encountered and that will be so new to him that he might be in danger of making mistakes. Assuredly he will have much to learn respecting the things of the Spirit of God. The Scriptures state that all will be brought under the blessing of the holy Spirit in the future.

These ancient worthies will not be begotten of the Spirit, as is the church, but the same prophecy that relates how the servants and hand-maids are to receive the holy Spirit during this Gospel age, tells also that, "after these days God will pour out his Spirit upon all flesh." And since those ancient worthies lived before the outpouring of the holy Spirit, their time for receiving a measure of this blessing belongs to the future and undoubtedly the giving of the holy Spirit to them will have much to do with fixing their characters, which will already be perfect. They will be brought to greater knowledge, and having already endured testings and been proven loyal, they will have only to learn how to use their talents and powers in full conformity with the divine will.

We understand that these men would be in a die-able condition, in the sense of being mortal and liable to death; but that they would come under the condemnation of the second death is highly improbable. If any man has stood trial under conditions of ignorance and superstition, and the measurable darkness of his time—has endured temptations from the world and from the adversary, and proven faithful under those conditions—it is reasonable to suppose that he would be found perfect under the conditions of the Millennial age, which will be so much more favorable to righteousness and full obedience to God. We therefore have no reason to suppose that any of the ancient worthies will come short of eternal life.

The fact that the ancient worthies will be under the New Covenant arrangement, under the Mediatorial kingdom, not having full access to the Father until the close of the Millennial age is not an evidence of disfavor nor anything contrary to their best interests, but rather a very gracious arrangement by which any possible mistake would be covered by Christ's mediation and would not bring them under the divine sentence of the second death. We are not expecting that they will make mistakes, but if, upon their awakening, they should be at once turned over to God and God's law should operate as we understand it will, and as it did in Adam's case, so that the slightest deflection would mean death, we see their position would be much less favorable. Therefore, the Millennial age will provide abundant opportunity to come to full knowledge; and we believe the Scriptures to indicate, though they do not positively so state, that their fidelity being further tested by their service during the Millennial age, as a part of the natural seed of Abraham, in blessing the remainder of his seed and all the Gentiles who will come into that seed, will constitute them worthy of an exchange of nature and a share with the Great Company on the spirit plane.

"WHEN I SHALL TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS"

Beyond all question the Apostle applies the above words (Rom. 11:27) to the Jewish people at the conclusion of this Gospel age, after God shall have gathered the spiritual seed of Abraham out of all nations. We cannot well consider this the forgiveness or taking away of their national sin, because their national sin shall have been expiated by their punishment in the past 1800 years, as St. Paul prophetically foretold, saying, "Wrath is come upon this people to the uttermost, that all things written in the Law and the prophecies concerning them should be fulfilled."

If, then, it is not their national sin that is referred to here, what sins are these? They are the individual sins of the Jew, similar to those which are upon all humanity, the sin in which they were born: as it is written, "I was born in sin, shapen in iniquity: in sin did my mother conceive me." This inherited sin comes down, we recognize, from Father Adam and Mother Eve and is termed original sin. It is true that God made a special arrangement with the Jewish nation whereby their original sin would be considered cancelled under the sacrificial arrangements of the Mosaic or Law Covenant. But, as the Apostle points out, this never brought them life nor release from divine condemnation pronounced first against Adam. It merely extended or doubled this condemnation, as it were, because they had first the Adamic sin condemnation, and second the condemnation of their Law Covenant.

The only explanation which will fit the Apostle's words is that suggested by the Lord through the Prophet (Jer. 31:31),

"This is my covenant with you when I shall take away your sins." The Apostle shows that this taking away of their sins and the instituting of the covenant with them, will be after this Gospel age, when the church, which is the body of Christ, shall have completed the sufferings of Christ and shall have entered into his glory.

The manner of the taking away of the sins of the Jews will not be the same as that of the church—instantaneous—but rather a gradual matter. Instead of Israel's being justified instantly to fellowship with God, they will be under the care and control of the great Mediator between God and men. And this great Mediator, Prophet, Priest and King will for one thousand years be engaged in the work of taking away their sins, according to this covenant which God specified through the Prophet Jeremiah. And at the conclusion of the one thousand years he will present them perfect, blameless, irrevocable to the Father. Having then accomplished the purposes of his Mediatorial kingdom work he will resign his dominion to God the Father, and Israel will thenceforth be in actual Covenant relationship with God.

As we have heretofore seen, it is the divine programme to permit all nations, peoples and kindreds of the human family to come in under this New Covenant with Israel: to come under the Mediator's blessings and Millennial kingdom; to have a share as Israelites indeed in all of the blessed opportunities for having their sins put away. And all who do not, whether Jew or Gentile, will die the second death: as it is written,