

fore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people [to administer justice to them], that I may discern between good and bad; for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?" Is it any wonder that we read further that in the dream the Lord manifested his good pleasure at this request: "And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither has asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment [justice]; therefore, I have done according to thy words: lo,

I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honor: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee, all thy days."

"I knelt before thy gracious throne,
And asked for peace with suppliant knee;
And peace was given: not peace alone,
But love, and joy, and ecstasy."

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE FIRE OF THIS DAY

Prayers that God would stop the great European war have not been answered. On the contrary, as pointed out in these columns nearly a year ago, the entire world is involved and distressed. The Bible predictions that the armies of all nations would be gathered to the valley of Jehoshaphat is proving true. (Joel 3:9-14) The Valley of Jehoshaphat is the name of the cemetery outside the walls of Jerusalem, and the prophecy signified that the armies of all nations would be gathered as one vast cemetery. With a battle front of over sixteen hundred miles, and with all kinds of infernal machinery, the flower of Europe's manhood goes down to death. All the participating nations are regretful, for each had hoped for greater successes than yet achieved. The Bible indicates great disappointment of all nations—no great victory for any, but on the contrary, humiliation and impoverishment. Already the bonds of all the warring powers are greatly depreciated. All national debts are so heavy that many thoughtful people are expecting that a result of the war will be repudiation of all national debts, as well as social revolution. Great victories and final achievement console the people for great losses; and similarly, great national disasters in the face of a successful foe, tend to cement the national spirit; but with a terrible war, with heavy losses, peace will mean discontent, revolution and, according to the Bible, ultimate anarchy. How consoling the thought given us by the words of Jesus, that for the elect's sake these days shall be shortened, but that otherwise the entire human family would be obliterated as the reign of selfishness and enmity would progress!

Thanks be to God that we know who the elect are—Jesus and his saintly followers glorified! Thanks be to God that we can have confidence that these will constitute the kingdom of God's dear Son, and be backed by all the power of heaven in the establishment of the reign of righteousness! Thanks be to God that we can have full confidence in the divine promises to the effect that the outcome of Messiah's reign will be "peace on earth and good will toward men" in a world-wide Eden! Thanks be to God that we can trust his promise that Messiah's kingdom will be successful in the complete uplift of the fallen race out of sin and death—back to the image and likeness of God for whosoever will! Thanks be to God that after all shall have had full opportunity for such recovery, all wilfully wicked will be utterly destroyed in the second death!

Thus far we are told the war is not deeply felt nor deeply impressed upon the average non-combatants. In all the warring countries business is fairly good. Money is kept in circulation by the manufacture of munitions of war and military equipment and supplies. Thus far the chief brunt falls upon the soldiers in the ranks and upon the bereaved widows and orphans. The chief evidences of war, except on the scenes of strife, are the numbers of men everywhere in military uniform, and the numbers of women wearing mourning. However, as credit depreciates and gold becomes more scarce, the prices of commodities of every sort will advance, wages in Europe will be forced upward, with accompanying labor troubles, leading on to the foretold great earthquake—revolution (Rev. 16:18); leading on still further to the predicted fire which is to consume every vestige of present civilization—not a literal fire, but anarchy.

This fire has already begun as respects religious faith. Harken to the Apostle Paul, "The fire of that day shall try every man's work of what sort it is." It will prove who have builded character and faith with the gold, silver and precious stones of divine promises, and who have builded their hopes with the wood, hay and stubble of human tradition. The latter, the Apostle declares, will be utterly burned or destroyed by the symbolic fire of this day, while the former class of faith alone will be able to withstand that fiery time. Do we not already see this? Do we not see that the great professors

of colleges and nearly all the great ministers of the various churches have completely lost faith in the Bible? Do we not see that the greater enlightenment of our time is making the creeds of all denominations ridiculous, absurd, to their own upholders and to all mankind? Do we not see that those who have abandoned the Bible have practically nothing left—merely their own guesswork? Do we not see that the guesswork of evolutionists is already proving unsatisfactory to them, and that they are losing all faith in a personal God, and merely assuming the possibility of an immortality of which they have no proofs and of the character of which they have only speculation? Ah, as the Apostle indicated, those who have the faith, the character structure represented by the gold, silver and precious stones of divine revelation—these alone have an anchorage of soul sure and steadfast which enters into that within the veil, and fastens for support to the merit of the sacrificial death of the great Redeemer who, "by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," and who by the grace of God is to be the great King whose kingdom will deliver Adam and his race from sin, death, ignorance, superstition, into the liberty of the children of God.

THE LORD'S BRETHREN NOT IN DARKNESS

Present conditions are very favorable for the spread of the truth. Everywhere the public are thinking more than ever respecting religious things, and wondering what it means that great nations, each purporting to be Christ's kingdom, should be so locked in deadly strife. Their perplexity and questions furnish excellent opportunity for explaining the Bible hopes and teachings. They are ready as never before for the message that these kingdoms are deceived into thinking themselves Christ's kingdoms, whereas the Bible calls them "kingdoms of this world" and Gentile kingdoms. They are ready for the message that Messiah's kingdom is to furnish the remedy for all the ills of the world by uplifting mankind out of ignorance, superstition, sin and death. They are ready for the information that although Christ was eighteen hundred years ago declared worthy to become the King he has not yet taken office in the full sense of the word, but is waiting for the completion of the church, which has been in process of calling and disciplining and polishing for more than eighteen hundred years. They are ready for the message that Christ is now taking to himself his great power and beginning his reign, and that the present disturbance of Europe is what is described in Revelation as the nations being angry, and God's wrath having come, etc.—Rev. 11:18.

In view of these favorable factors, we perceive our privilege in continuing to give no uncertain sound upon the silver trumpets of Jubilee. Apparently many of God's servants are being sealed in their foreheads with this knowledge, this present truth, as the Scriptures predicted: "Ye brethren are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief" (1 Thessalonians 5:4), though it shall come upon the whole world as a thief and a snare. As the Savior said, perplexities are causing the hearts of men to fail for fear and for looking after the things coming upon the world, still future, but because of the sealing in our foreheads—the clear intellectual knowledge—the servants of God may, as Jesus suggested, be lifting up their heads and rejoicing, realizing from present developments that their deliverance draweth nigh—that the resurrection of the church and her glorious establishment as Messiah's bride in the kingdom, are near at hand, even at the door.

WINDS OF WAR LET LOOSE

How plainly now we can see what we saw less distinctly in the past—that the winds of war have been held back for approximately forty years to give opportunity for the sealing of the servants of God in their foreheads, for the spread of true Bible study all over the world, in all languages. Any one thinking of the present war as being suddenly thrust upon

the nations is surely short-sighted. For forty years the newspapers of the world have been foretelling this war as imminent; every fall they would declare that it must come by spring; every summer they would declare that it must come by fall, and it was so long held back by divine interference that many began to wonder whether or not the war might be ultimately avoided. But not so; the war is the only way in which the kingdom of Messiah can be established. It will be in vain that the message might be sent to the Czar of Russia, to the Kaiser, or to the Emperor Francis Joseph, or to the British King that the time has come for Messiah to set up his kingdom, and that all kingdoms of earth should now be turned over to him. They would laugh at such a proposition and resist it at every cost. Instead, God merely lets loose the winds of war—he will no longer restrain—he will allow human selfishness to take its own unwise course. He will allow all nations to deceive themselves into thinking that they will be more firmly established, and enlarge their domains and pave the way to future prosperity by this war. Surely it is in view of this that all nations have been preparing for this war for forty years, by the building of great dreadnaughts, the organizing of great armies, etc., each according to its sphere of influence and greatest power. Is it not a master stroke of divine wisdom which permits the nations claiming to be Christ's kingdoms to destroy each other's power, to weaken each other, and to demonstrate by their strife that they have not even the first conception of the Spirit of Christ, of which, the Apostle says, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," a principle which is applicable to nations as well as individuals? At the same time it should not be forgotten that there are saints of God in every land, and that doubtless there are saints in every army—in these armies because of conscription—in these armies to fulfil the demands of the governments, but with fullest determination that they at the same time owe their highest allegiance to the kingdom of kindness, and fully determined that they will kill nobody. We are hearing from the front, that they are seeking to live up to the teachings of the Word of God, pointed out in the sixth volume of *SCRIPTURE STUDIES*, and that they are being blessed in so doing. What more could we ask?

"WAIT YE UPON ME, SAITH THE LORD"

Inquiries come to us respecting the advisability of enlisting in hospital corps, rather than to be conscripted for the regular service later on. Our advice would be to wait for the leadings of the Lord's providence and to take such steps only when fully assured of their wisdom. Now is a good time

to remember the words of the Lord, "Wait ye upon me, saith the Lord." It would be a mistake, however, for any of the Lord's people to think themselves called upon to interfere in any manner with the world's course in respect to enlistment. Let the worldly use their own judgment, while God's consecrated people use theirs. To be "subject to the powers that be," implies not merely a willingness to serve under compulsion, but implies also that we will not oppose earthly governments in any public manner. The public reproof and overthrow will come from the Lord. The smiting of the image, which will grind it to powder, will come not from the church in the flesh, with carnal weapons, but from the church in kingdom glory, backed by divine power.—Daniel 2:45.

There never was a time of greater need that all of God's people should remember the Apostle's instruction, "Let your moderation be known to all men." Even in discussing the time of trouble emphasis should be laid not so much upon the trouble as upon the glorious kingdom which will be inaugurated at that time and through the instrumentality of the trouble. Let us remember one another in prayer at this time and especially those who are in desperate situations. The Lord seems to have provided the vow as a special means of comforting and supporting one another. Approximately 15,000 have already indicated to us that they have taken the vow, and that therefore they belong to this great world-wide prayer circle which remembers each other and all the laborers in the Lord's kingdom daily at the throne of grace.

KILLED, WOUNDED AND PRISONERS

RED CROSS SOCIETY REPORT TO MARCH 1, 1915.

Prominent newspapers are publishing the following:

The total killed in the European conflict up to March 1 of this year was 2,136,000; seriously wounded, 1,150,000; slightly wounded 3,781,100; prisoners, 1,764,000, making a total of 8,831,000.

These appalling figures were compiled by the Red Cross Society, and were furnished by the German consulate in Denver today.

The tabulated figures show the losses as follows:

	Germany	Austria	France	England	Russia	Total
Dead	482,000	341,000	464,000	116,000	733,000	2,136,000
Wounded:						
Slightly ..	760,000	618,000	718,000	185,000	1,500,000	3,781,000
Seriously :	97,000	83,000	439,000	49,000	482,000	1,150,000
Prisoners ...	233,000	183,000	495,000	83,000	770,000	1,764,000

Totals 1,572,000 1,225,000 2,116,000 433,000 3,485,000 8,831,000

Allies, without Belgians, Serbs and Montenegrins, 6,034,000.

Germans and Austrians, 2,797,000.

THE PRESENT ADVANTAGES OF FAITH

"Without faith it is impossible to please God; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."—Hebrews 11:6.

Paul the Apostle is in this text laying down a general principle as to what is the divine pleasure. God is not pleased to deal with humanity as with the brute beasts. He did not make man to live a mere animal existence, appreciating only the enjoyment of his physical senses. Man was made to glorify his Creator and to have a knowledge of him, in order to obtain the fullest happiness and blessing from the enjoyment of his God-given faculties.

As man shall in due time come to see his Creator's glorious character and the object of his own existence, and as he grows in ability to appreciate these, he will be most highly blessed. The knowledge gained will bring full confidence in God to all who become upright in heart and who desire to conform themselves to the grand purpose of their Maker in creation. Mankind are now bowed down with the weight of the sin and the accumulated infirmities of the ages, in bondage to Satan and his evil reign. Man has been the spectacle of the universe. He has been the source of astonishment and sorrow to all the holy beings in God's infinite domain. His experiences, his weaknesses, his degradation, his sufferings under sin, have through all the centuries been preaching most powerful sermons, and have been giving impressive object lessons as to the effects of disobedience to God.

Throughout the Millennial age, the great Jehovah will do a mighty work through the Messiah. It will be a work of opening all the eyes long blinded to the glorious light of the goodness of God. It will be a work of unstopping all the ears long deaf to the voice of truth. The sons of men shall be washed from their pollution; their wounds and putrefying sores shall be anointed, bound up and gradually healed by the Great Physician; their tattered raiment shall be exchanged for the garments of righteousness. By the close of the Golden age of blessing man shall stand forth clothed and in his right mind, a glorious image of his Creator in the flesh.

When man shall have attained the full likeness of God, he will not need any special development of faith; for faith will be inherent in him. He will have communion with his Maker; he will once more be a son of God. He will know his Creator as even Adam had such revelations of the terrible nature and results of sin, of the marvelous love of God in his deliverance from sin, that he will have an established character, fixed for righteousness, and a hatred of sin that will be an all-sufficient safeguard throughout eternity. After all this manifestation of the contrast between righteousness and iniquity, between the glorious sunshine of God's love and the horrible darkness and gloom of the pit from which they were lifted, any who still love and prefer the bondage of corruption will be destroyed in the second death.

When man first fell from his perfect estate, and the penalty of death was pronounced, the conditions did not manifest Jehovah as a loving God; and man thought he would be happier in his alienation and sin if he did not know about God at all. God gave, indeed, a hint of a coming time of restoration, when the Seed of the woman should crush the serpent's head; but the statement was vague. So, with very few exceptions, men tried to forget God, to give him no place in their thoughts or their affection. Gradually they drifted further and further away from him.

"WITHOUT GOD, HAVING NO HOPE!"

St. Paul in commenting upon this fact, declares that God gave mankind over to a reprobate mind. As they did not wish to retain him in their knowledge, he left them to their evil course, to pursue the lusts of their depraved minds, and to learn by sad experience the bitter fruitage of sin, and the misery, vanity and woe which it brings. Man's perverse heart must be broken, before he can be brought to a realization of his condition as declared by the Apostle in the words, "Without God, and having no hope in the world"! Humanity

has had bitter experiences, and has gone down from one depth of depravity to another, until now mankind have become so alienated from God by wicked works and self-will that many do not know that there is a God. Others conjure up in their minds a demon, whom they worship as God. So the poor world is today in a sadly confused, benighted condition.

Many believe that there is some law of nature, some law of development and progression; and thus they speak of nature as God—an impersonal god. They cannot worship such a god; for an impersonal god could not sympathize with them nor deliver them from their troubles. The Bible, however, presents a God of intelligence, a God of sympathy, a God who cares for his creatures and who has a marvelous plan for their restoration to his own glorious likeness. How glad we are that we know this loving, living God! How glad we are that he has let us into the secrets of his counsels, that he has made known his wonderful plan to us in advance of the inauguration of the great work! How it rejoices our hearts, to know not only of our own glorious share and place in this great plan, but to know also of the blessings so soon to come to the poor groaning creation!

BLESSINGS PROPORTIONATE TO FAITH

In proportion as the people of God come into close heart-fellowship with him, in proportion as they hear his voice speaking to them through the prophets of old, through Jesus and his apostles, and through his daily providences, they hear a good message, a glorious message, one that assures them of his loving sympathy, of his great power and of his purpose to exercise that power for the deliverance and blessing of all the world. As the Scriptures themselves assure us, it is a message of "great joy to all people." Some can believe and receive this message of good more readily than can others, and the more fully one receives it the more fully he will be blessed. Both knowledge and faith are necessary for that blessing. Some have not now the capacity for faith and some have not the knowledge. Those who have no faith will have to wait over for the next age.

Some can look out into the realms of space and by modern appliances and mathematical calculations determine the distance to the sun, the center of our own solar system. With the aid of the telescope they can sweep through the vast expanse of the universe and see something of its grandeur and its glory. They can study the movements of the planets in their various orbits, and forecast their future positions. They can ascertain also that there is a vast system of systems in the great material universe. Truly, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language. (But) their melody extendeth through all the earth, and to the end of the world their words!"—See Leaser and R. V.

But these wise men who study these wonderful works of the Almighty do not realize nor appreciate the love of God as manifested in his Son, our Redeemer. They have a certain knowledge of the Power of God, but very few of them appreciate his character. As the Apostle Paul has truly said: "In the wisdom of God, the world through its wisdom knows not God." (1 Corinthians 1:21. R. V.) Jehovah does not purpose that any shall know him save in his own appointed way. The wisdom of man cannot find him out.

God is now seeking only those who have the true wisdom, in that they realize their own insufficiency, their need of instruction and guidance, and who can exercise the necessary faith when the message of God is brought to them. All others will be able to appreciate the message in the incoming age of blessing. Those who are now too wise in their own conceits will be brought through humiliating experiences to a contrite and humble condition of mind. The credulous will be given the true knowledge which will lead to a real faith.

Many noble minds are filled with the wisdom of this world. They think of the mighty universe with its millions upon millions of systems of worlds rolling through infinite space. They look at the earth, and think of the comparative insignificant size of the little planet on which we live. By the power of the microscope, they examine the wonderful construction of plant and flower. They scrutinize the marvels of the structure of molecules and atoms of matter, and of midgets, mites and microbes. Then they shake their heads and say: "The idea that a God of such infinite power would concern himself about humanity! He is far too busy to trouble himself about us!" These must wait a further and more favorable time for their enlightenment. The Lord can deal as yet only with those who have naturally some faith and who have gained a sufficient knowledge of himself and of his character to believe in his love and to be desirous of coming into fellowship and communion with him.

The basis of the Apostle's argument in our text is that faith is the essential thing in coming to God. God will not receive any one who does not exercise faith. St. Paul recounts the faith of the worthies of old, who gained such victories through their faith, and who received the testimony that they pleased God. Then he declares that whoever would come to God now must believe. There are some who are drawn to the Lord, who desire to come to him. There are others who desire to get away from him as far as possible and to keep away. These have no real knowledge of God, but are grossly blinded by "the god of this world."—2 Cor. 4:3, 4.

The class referred to in our text as coming to God or as willing to come to him, have a heart-hunger for their Creator—a longing for him that nothing else can satisfy. They say to themselves, "There is a God who made me. The more I learn respecting the vast universe and of my own anatomy, the more I see the wisdom and the power of God, and the more I realize my own littleness and weakness and need. For this great God my soul is crying out, and I have been told that he has made a revelation of himself, that to certain prophets of old he revealed the fact that he takes an interest in his human creatures. I mean to study what he has declared through these his servants. I am also told that he has revealed himself and his love further through Jesus Christ his Son; and that this Son of God came to earth and died for sinful man that he might live. If God has really given man his message, I want that message; I will draw near to this God, that I also may receive his blessing."

The Lord encourages all such through his Word. He says, "Draw nigh to me, and I will draw nigh to you." And as these come, seeking to know his will, he becomes the rewarder of their faith. He points them to the one who is the propitiation for the sins of all who come to him. He makes known to them that those who come to him through his appointed channel may have the Savior as their Advocate, upon the terms of faith and consecration to lay down their lives in sacrifice with him. Thus step by step they come into the fulness of salvation, and enter into the Holiest by the blood of the cross. They are accepted in the Beloved.

CREDULITY NOT FAITH

Many imagine that they have faith when in reality they have only credulity. Their so-called faith is not founded upon the Word of God and upon his promises. Such credulity will surely fail when the great testing time comes. Credulity is the acceptance of a thing without good reason, without sure evidence. Faith, on the contrary, is the acceptance of a thing because we have indisputable evidence of its reality, its truthfulness and its reliability. As we exercise faith in God, we come nearer and nearer to him.

"According to your faith be it unto you," are the Master's words. Every exercise of faith is based upon something real and tangible to faith. There is a mental tangibility for faith and also a physical, or outward, tangibility. True wisdom searches out the two grounds for faith. "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him; and he will show them his covenant."

These increase in faith as they go on in the path of obedience. Faith and obedience are like our two feet. We put one forward, and then the other, and then the first one forward; and so we develop in faith by continuing in the spirit of obedience, following on wherever the Lord points the way. "We walk by faith and not by sight." But we have good, tangible evidences all along our heavenward journey. Outside of all other evidences, the true Christian has in his own personal experiences abundant proof of our Father's love and care. The Master said, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them shall fall upon the ground without your Father. . . . But ye are of more value than many sparrows." (Matthew 10:29) As he progresses in the narrow way the child of God comes to learn the fulness of meaning in these words of our Lord.

So the Christian who walks closely with the Master finds the truth of the Apostle's words that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence [proof, conviction] of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1) Faith is not only a groundwork, or basis, for our hopes (itself also having a groundwork in proven facts), but it is a real substance—a mental substance, so to speak, which stimulates and clarifies the mind. Faith is not a substance that we can hold in our hand or walk on with our feet. But it becomes a strength to our minds as we progress in the knowledge of God and of the things which God has to give to those who love him above all else and who seek to render him loving, devoted service. Faith becomes as real and tangible to us as any material substance—even more so; for the things upon which our faith lays hold are eternal.

"THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION"

"Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."—Revelation 3:10.

Our Lord's words addressed "to the angel of the church in Philadelphia," had their fulfilment, we understand, during the period which closed somewhere about the time when the harvest of this age began. We are not to think of the different epochs represented in the messages to the various churches as being exact periods, as though there was a particular instant of beginning and a particular instant of closing. Rather we are to understand each to be a general period, which laps over the one on the other. So this period of faithfulness to the Lord's Word of which our text treats seems to have been one of some length, just as this Laodicean period in which we live has covered a considerable time, but is nearly ended now, we think.

For a long time God's Word was lightly esteemed. The transition from a poor understanding to a better understanding of it came on gradually. The Two Witnesses of God, the Old and New Testaments, long clothed in the sackcloth of the dead languages, gradually ascended to heaven, the place of honor and power, as the Scriptures symbolically represent the matter. (Revelation 11:3-12) Then came the general announcement that the time of the second advent of Christ had come. This was sometimes called the Wolff movement and sometimes the Miller movement; for one was the leader in one part of the world, and the other in the other part. America at this time was representative of the advanced thought of the world. This proclamation of the kingdom of Christ was a remarkable movement, which we believe is referred to by our Lord in the Parable of the Ten Virgins, who awoke and trimmed their lamps. But it was a false alarm. The Bridegroom did not come.

DISAPPOINTMENT OF MILLER MOVEMENT A SIFTING

This disappointment caused a sifting among the professed people of God. Some became all the more interested in the Bible as the Word of God, and did not doubt, while others became haughty and skeptical, and declared that the Bible was a foolish old book, that anybody who paid any attention to these prophecies must be soft in the head, etc. So these did not keep to the Word of God, but discarded its declarations. The promises and prophecies of the Bible relating to the Master's second coming, though positive and numerous, were abandoned by most of the great teachers. Consequently the people knew very little about the Bible. Of course their faith could not be much greater than their knowledge.

As a result the work of the Miller movement was a sort of separation, as between those who kept the the Word of God with patience and those who lost their faith in his Word. This persistent, patient faith of the true saints of God is what we think is referred to here by keeping "the word of my patience." The general hour of temptation, therefore, would not come upon them, but upon those who came after them—the Laodicean church. The Philadelphia church, which had patiently passed through so severe a trial of their faith, would not be subjected to the later test.

"The hour of temptation" has come upon us now. This hour of temptation has been the harvest time. In many respects it has tested the Lord's people, and has proven who are faithful to the Word of God and who are not faithful to it. Hence the majority of the professing Christians of the world—probably more than three-fourths—have lost all faith in the Bible, and have fallen into the various false and delusive theories of our day—Evolution, Higher Criticism, Christian Science, Theosophy, Spiritism, New Thought, etc. They have fallen from faith, from loyalty to the Lord's Word. They are not able to stand in this "evil day."

FALL OF FAITH FOR A TIME

The trials of this "evil day" do not end with the church, "with the house of God"—though they begin there. The hour of temptation was to "come upon all the world, to try them that dwell on the earth." The temptation, the trial, is going out amongst the people of every nation, especially to all parts of Christendom. In the severe experiences through which many have passed, they have been led to doubt the very existence of God. They cannot conceive of a God who would allow such terrible calamities as have already come, and who will allow the yet greater calamities which the thoughtful see are still to come! Not knowing God's great plan, not seeing the glorious outcome of present conditions, the golden lining to the dark cloud now settling down upon the whole world, people will lose all confidence in a supreme government. Poor humanity in their ignorance and blindness have not been enlightened through the Word of God, have not known of the coming kingdom and the method by which it will be inaugurated and the purpose and object of its inauguration.

So the present crisis is surely a time of great trial upon the whole world. Many of these have constituted a nominal church; and in this period of testing and shaking all church systems will go completely to pieces. Babylon will fall; for she is neither able nor worthy to stand in this great trial day. And great will be her fall! It will mean for a little time the general destruction of faith—the fall of faith, we think. This seems to be the meaning of the prophecy, "For the Lord shall rise up as in Mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon; that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act." (Isaiah 28:21) Those not having understood, not having given heed to the Word, will be entirely disconcerted.

THE PHILADELPHIA CHURCH SPARED

As to the Philadelphia stage of the church, and their being saved from the hour of temptation, we think possibly the Lord meant that some of the church of that epoch would live over into the present period, and that they would not be subjected to the special trials of this hour. For instance, we think of a very fine old gentleman, who was about ninety years of age at the time we are about to mention. He was pastor of a church. He seemed to receive present truth with a great deal of joy and spoke it forth with much zeal. But he was surrounded with so much opposition at home, and in the church to which he was attached as a minister, that he could not seem to trust to his mental judgment. He apparently thought to himself, "I am about ninety years of age. I cannot trust the reliability of my own judgment. Even if I go on the street I need some one to take my arm, or I theirs, lest I run into something. If I were sure that this is the Lord's will, I would be willing to endure any amount of opposition. But I am not sure."

We have sometimes thought of that old gentleman as perhaps a representative of a large class, and we have considerable sympathy for him in that he was not able to take his stand and come out of Babylon. This Scripture which we are considering has rather comforted our mind with respect to him and others like him. These seemed to prove loyal to the Lord's Word, and faithful to the extent of their ability to understand. Probably any of these coming over into the harvest time would not be counted in as of the harvest period. We are not, of course, certain of this. We only know that the Lord promised those of the Philadelphia period that they should be spared the trials now upon the Laodicean phase of the church and upon the world.

HIS SERVANTS WE ARE TO WHOM WE RENDER SERVICE

"For ye were sometimes [once] darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light."—Ephesians 5:8.

John the beloved Apostle of Jesus wrote, "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." This figure of speech pervades the entire Bible. Everywhere light stands for truth, for righteousness; and darkness represents error, superstition, sin. Our Lord Jesus being in full harmony with the Father, was the light of the world. To this end came he into the world. One of the titles he assumed was "The light of the world." (John 8:12) Although he was in the world, the world knew him not. They loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

The Apostle Paul explains that the darkness on the part of the world comes either directly or indirectly from the adversary. He says that "the god of this world hath blinded

the minds of them that believe not." Then he proceeds to tell us why this is so. Satan does this "lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them," shine into their hearts. In order to keep mankind away from God, Satan has put light for darkness and darkness for light. This has been largely through good people, whom Satan has more or less used, ignorantly on their part, as his tools. As a matter of fact, darkness is very gross in the world, and light is seen only by the few. Thus the Apostle prays for the church that the eyes of their understanding may be enlightened, indicating that the eyes of even the consecrated people of God are not fully enlightened, not fully opened. He prays for this in order that they may be

able to comprehend what is the length, the breadth, the height and the depth of the love of God, the love of Christ, which passeth all understanding.

We perceive, then, that to see God—to see the truth, to know the deep things of God—is to have a very glorious conception of the Almighty, of his character and his plan. We see that the adversary tries to keep us in the dark, and that God is permitting this for a time—permitting the ignorance, superstition, sin, darkness, which envelopes mankind. But those who learn of the Savior whom God has provided, who put themselves into his hands, who study God's Word, and thus struggle against the darkness of error, superstition and infirmity, get their eyes more widely open. As they do this, they become stronger of character. So there is a good purpose served in these battles. We are, therefore, to maintain a good fight against sin and against selfishness.

THE TRANSFER FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

A question may be asked as to how we pass from the one class to the other, how we were changed from being children of darkness to being children of light. We were once in the darkness class. We were once in ignorance and misunderstanding of God—in unbelief. We were confused with the gloom of the dark ages. But now we are enjoying the light. No one of us as yet has full light, but some grow more rapidly than others in grace, in knowledge and in love. After our begetting of the Spirit we progress in the development of the fruits of the Spirit; we are transformed in mind and finally perfected in the first resurrection.

This transfer from darkness to light, then, is accomplished in a more or less gradual way. The first thing we needed was knowledge—to have some measure, some glimpse of light. So if we were fortunate enough to have, as natural men and women, some glimpse of God's goodness, some appreciation logically of what is truth and what is falsehood, what is reasonable and what is unreasonable—to that extent we were favored in our birth. The Lord intimates that not all are called, not all are drawn. (John 6:37, 44; 1 Corinthians 1:26-29) To have this measure of light before we consecrate ourselves to God through Christ indicates that circumstances have favored us; either the circumstances of our birth or of our lives have been favorable to us. Under these favorable influences our eyes have been to some degree opened; and we have become more and more ready to sacrifice everything to obtain the light.

But if we are not of the right disposition, when we get a little light we prefer to fall back into the darkness rather than to walk in the light and to have the difficulties and trials which loyalty to the light will bring. In order to be worthy of more light we must have the character which will follow the light as it is seen. "If any man will be my disciple," said the Master, "let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me"—let him give up his own will, deny himself, die to himself, and give himself fully into the hands of the Lord.

"CHILDREN OF LIGHT" TO BE PROVEN

To those who see but dimly, this is a large contract. But those who love righteousness and hate iniquity to the extreme will follow the light whatever the cost. The Lord is gracious to these; and when they consecrate themselves to him, on his terms, he gives them the begetting of the holy Spirit. This is the start of a new influx of light; for the natural man cannot receive the deep things of God, because they are spiritually discerned. Only the spiritual can grasp them. (1 Corinthians 2:9-14) Then the Apostle proceeds to say that we the church, are able to understand these things, yea, the deep things of God, because we are begotten of God, begotten as new crea-

tures, to the new nature. We do not understand them all from the start, but more and more they are revealed to us as we progress in the narrow way. This spiritual understanding is a guiding light, an inspiration to righteousness; it creates an enthusiasm for righteousness. Thus we become children of the light.

After we have once become children of light, there are testings, provings, for us to undergo. The Lord Jesus tells us that if we would be faithful to the light we must let our light so shine as to show forth the praises of our Father in heaven. He forewarns us that many will not appreciate our good works, but will say all manner of evil against us falsely, for his name's sake. He assures us that the children of darkness hate the children of light; but he admonishes that in these experiences we should "rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven." Such is the sentiment of the children of the light that they will rejoice even in persecution and in tribulation. As they let the light, the truth, shine out, the error will be manifested to those of right understanding and of noble heart. The children of the darkness, of the error, will be angry with us for showing up the error in which they are entrenched, and will persecute us as they did the Master.

THE FINAL TEST OF THE CHURCH

It is reasonable to expect that the time will yet come when all who are faithful to the Lord will be treated in like manner as was our Lord. Indeed, it is already coming. It behooves us individually to put on the whole armor of light, that we may be able to withstand whatever persecution comes upon us from the blinded followers of the adversary. It does not necessarily follow that the instruments of Satan are murderers and thugs. When we look back at our Lord's first advent, we see that those who were most successfully used of the adversary against our Lord Jesus were the chief religionists, the scribes, the Pharisees, the Doctors of the Jewish Law—professedly men of God and leaders of his people. But "his servants ye are to whom ye render service," said the Lord. Those, therefore, who rendered service in the way of persecuting the Master, and finally in crucifying him, were the servants of Satan, no matter whose servants they thought they were.

But we are not to think that because of this they will be condemned to eternal torture. We are to remember, too, that they were servants of Satan partially on account of ignorance. As the Apostle Peter said to the Jews on the Day of Pentecost, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." St. Paul also bears witness of this fact, saying, "For if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory." They did these things because they were the blinded servants of Satan, though if their hearts had been true and humble, they would have been able to see, as did the faithful "remnant" of Israel—the "Israelites indeed." The Jews who crucified Jesus went into an awful time of trouble therefor; but soon now, we believe, they shall "look upon him [with the eye of faith] whom they pierced, and shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son;" and God "will pour upon them the Spirit of prayer and of supplication."—Zechariah 12:9, 10.

And so presumably today there are really good men who are servants of Satan and do not know it. If any know and yet do such evil works, it would seem that they will have a very serious account to settle. God alone knows the culpability of each. Their enlightenment too is near, and great will be the confusion of face of those who, because of unfaithfulness, have been instruments of the adversary to persecute, malign and afflict the true children of God, who faithfully proclaimed the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

OUR STANDING ONLY IN CHRIST

"A body hast Thou prepared Me."—Hebrews 10:5.

Mother Eve had no standing with God except as a part of the body of Adam, for she was taken from his side. We understand that this represents that the church has no standing with God of herself, that to produce her required the sacrifice of Jesus her Lord. In other words, she came from his side. The second Adam, is the heavenly Lord—the first-born from the dead, the justifier, the life-giver to the world. During this Gospel age, God has been selecting the church to be the bride of Christ, and she has been in process of development. As the bride, the Lamb's wife, she may be considered to be the second Eve; and her work is to be during the incoming age, the mothering, or caring for the race of Adam, begotten again by "the Lord from heaven," the second Adam.—1 Cor. 15:45-47.

The whole picture shows us that the responsibility of the fall was in Adam. St. Paul points out that Mother Eve was the one who was deceived and was first in the transgression, but also points out that it was through Adam's disobedience that sin entered the world; and thus death passed upon all men, "for all have sinned" (Romans 5:12)—showing the effect of Adam's fall upon his offspring, through heredity. As "the wages of sin is death," and as the sin that brought the death was Adam's sin and not Eve's sin, it follows that the redemption-price would be that which corresponds to Adam, and not that which corresponds to Eve.

THE BODY OF SACRIFICE

When we read, "A body hast thou prepared me," as a sacrifice, we are not to understand this to mean the church, the

body of Christ, prepared for sacrifice. The body prepared for sacrifice was the human body of Jesus. It was prepared in the sense that it was provided him miraculously, and was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. Jesus alone had such a body prepared for him. The church has no such body.

Our Lord Jesus was ordained of God a Priest after the Order of Melchizedek; for sacrificially he was the antitype of Adam, and was first to offer up himself, and subsequently to accept his disciples, justify them through his sacrifices, and then constitute them members, or parts, of his sacrifice. It is evident that in the type only the high priest was ordained to offer up the sin-offering of the Day of Atonement. None of the under priests had such a right. So none of the antitypical under priests, the followers of Christ, are competent to offer up themselves. All that we can do is to present ourselves to our Redeemer, who justifies us—consecrating our lives unto death. He accepts us, imputes his merit to us, and counts us members of his fleshly body; and then by his holy Spirit, through Christ, God operates in us “to will and to do his good pleasure,” which is to carry out the work of

self-sacrifice even unto death. But all this while the Church is not sacrificed as was the High Priest, nor presented to the Father in our own name. The Father's dealing is only with our Advocate, and we are accepted merely because we are his.

All this is shown in the Atonement Day type of the sin-offering. The high priest offered the bullock first, as his own sacrifice—representing himself individually. Then the high priest, not the under priests, afterwards offered the Lord's goat—one goat, not many goats. This goat was offered, not as the sacrifice of the under priests, but as the sacrifice of the high priest. So in the antitype. Our consecration is acceptable to the Father only because of the merit of Jesus imputed to us as his members when he adopts us as a part of his own flesh.

This is in response to a question. We cannot make this matter more clear than we have here done, which is the same exactly that we have tried to say on this subject in the *SCRIPTURE STUDIES* and in *THE WATCH TOWER*. We exhort to prayer that the mind of the Lord may be understood and that you may have a blessing.

HOW TO PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

“Speaking the Truth in love, . . . grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ.”—Ephesians 4:15.

The truth is always to be spoken humbly, but fearlessly. The Christian is not at liberty to speak anything but the truth. If he is a professed minister of the Gospel when the truth reaches him, he is not to continue to preach error just because the congregation employing him do not want the truth. A worldling in the pulpit would have no qualms of conscience. He would reason, “I am giving these people the very things they want. They are paying my salary, and this is purely a business proposition.” The worldling calling himself a minister of Christ would take this position because he had never received the Spirit, the disposition of the truth—the holy Spirit of begetting.

But one who receives the truth in the love of it, who imbibes its spirit, would say, “I now see that many of the things I have been preaching for years are injurious, dishonoring to God, misrepresenting his character, and to some extent, at least, turning people away from the truth. This is the very opposite of what I wish to do. I cannot longer dispense error. I am not an ambassador of a denomination or a congregation, I am an ambassador for God. I am not the servant of this congregation, but the servant of the Lord. If I should still preach error when I have come to see the truth, I would be guilty before God.”

THE HONOR OF OUR AMBASSADORSHIP

Such a faithful servant of God would by his uncompromising attitude lose his standing and his honor amongst men. But all this is not to be considered; for he would gain instead the favor and blessing of the Lord. The great Apostle declared that he counted all things but loss and dross, that he might win Christ and “be found in him”—that he might gain a place in the everlasting kingdom of Messiah. Those who succeed in so doing will win the “pearl of great price.” So, then, the speaking of the truth is absolutely essential to the life of the Christian. The truth of God's Word is to be enshrined above all else in the heart of the child of God, and he should esteem it a blessed privilege to speak it.

Our power of speech, of communicating our thoughts to others, is the greatest power we possess—the most far-reaching. It is a potent factor for either good or evil, for either truth or error. The opportunity to speak the truth, to confess Christ before men, either publicly or privately, is a great privilege. In order to be a servant pleasing to the Lord, one who can be effectively used of him, one must speak the truth in love. When one has just entered the family of God, less might be reasonably expected of him than after he had been for some time in the family. We, as God's dear children are to grow in the likeness of our dear Elder Brother, our Pattern, our Head. We are to “grow up into him in all things.” We are to recognize that he is the Head of the church; and that if we are to be members of his body in glory, we must be developed. We are to bear the fruitage of the holy Spirit, that we may be qualified to share in the future that glorious kingdom which is to bless the world.

“EXPRESSION DEEPENS IMPRESSION”

We are to exercise our function of ambassadorship—we are to show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of the darkness into his marvelous light. And in telling the message of his grace we shall grow spiritually. “He that watereth shall himself also be watered.” As we proclaim the

truth from an honest, earnest, loving heart we shall become more and more filled with it ourselves. “There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth and it tendeth to poverty”—to leanness of soul. As we give out to others, our own store of blessing is increased. We are to develop day by day this quality of love. Why is this? Because it will make us like God, and that is the one thing to be desired—the one thing necessary.

Our God has other glorious attributes besides Love, but this attribute is the especially predominating, overruling quality of his character. God's justice co-operates with his love. And his wisdom would not attempt to carry out any plans that his love would not approve. So as we grow, this quality of love should be more and more manifest. We are to see that our words are loving, kind, gentle. We are to curb any tendency to self-glorification or show in telling of God's great plan to others. Let us keep self out of sight, that the beauty of the truth may be seen. Our manner of presenting the message to others has much to do with its effectiveness. Speaking the truth in love, we shall not only be accomplishing much more for others, but the message will also be more impressed upon our own mind.

Whoever appreciates these things of God and then speaks forth in love and sincerity will receive a blessing in his own heart and mind, and the truth will become clearer and sweeter. In helping others he will be helping himself. Thus the various features of the plan of God become more firmly engraved upon his mind.

NATURAL QUALITIES THAT NEED RESTRAINT

In the cases of the stronger characters which come into Christ, we see a special need for watchfulness in the proclamation of the truth. Those naturally lacking in combativeness would not be inclined to bring strong pressure to bear upon others in connection with their presentation of truth. If their message did not seem to be favorably received, they would be likely to feel. They do not like to hear what I have to say; so I will not talk any more on the subject. They might be too easily discouraged. But those who have more force, or combativeness, are liable to manifest this disposition in the way they present the truth. They are inclined to be too forceful—to present the matter as an obligation.

But we are to remember that this is not a compulsory matter now. It is now an invitation, and is designed only for the meek, the teachable. By and by force will be needed, and used. Those who now have the hearing ear need only the word of instruction and counsel. Those who require force are not the ones the Lord is now seeking. If any of the Lord's ambassadors endeavor to crowd the message upon others, it will arouse antagonism and lose its power. Thus our King would not be so well served, and hence would not be so well pleased.

Others of the Lord's people may have great approbateness. They may have pride and may wish to show off their ability in language, or their skill in handling the Scriptures. They might give out the message with the idea of arousing in others the thought. “See how much he knows—he is a master at handling the Bible!” Approbateness seems to present quite a subtle temptation to many. This tendency of the flesh must be very carefully watched and subdued, or it will ruin the usefulness of the Christian and greatly hinder

his own growth. Some naturally like to be in the lime-light, while others are just as anxious to keep out of it. The one might have to force himself in order to speak the truth in public as an ambassador, while the other would need to curb himself somewhat. The only way for the latter to do is to

learn to speak the truth in love and in humility—to speak it out of love to God and love to the brethren. The plan of the ages is God's plan. We have nothing whereof to boast. Therefore we should present that plan in meekness, gentleness, brotherly-kindness and love.

ISRAEL'S "SEVEN TIMES" OF CHASTISEMENT A BLESSING

Question.—If the punishment for all the righteous blood shed from Abel's day to our Lord's day came upon the Jews in the year 70 A. D., how can we explain the chastisements through which they have been passing all down the Gospel age?

Answer.—We certainly know that the Jews said at the time of our Lord's death at their hands, "His blood be upon us and upon our children." They not only were willing to bear personally the responsibility for Jesus' death, but expressed the desire that their posterity also should bear it. Doubtless God, with his foreknowledge in respect to what this people would do, as well as in respect to their general heart condition, had from the beginning planned their "seven times" of disfavor. This he had caused to be recorded by Moses in the book of Leviticus (26:18-45). God had there declared that if the Israelites did not repent of their transgressions against their covenant, and if his repeated chastisements failed to reform them, he would bring upon them "seven times" of punishment and discipline.

In Bible chronology a "time" is a symbolic year. According to Jewish reckoning each year was composed of 360 days; hence when used symbolically each year would mean 360 years, and seven such symbolic years would be a period of 2520 literal years. These seven times, or seven symbolic years, began in 606 B. C. at the destruction of Jerusalem and the carrying away of the entire nation into Babylon, at the time when the foretold 70 years of desolation of the land began (Jer. 25:8-12; 2 Chron. 36:14-22), and has continued ever since, we understand, or until about September 21st last.

During this long period of affliction upon Israel, the Lord has given the Gentile nations an opportunity of showing what they could do in the way of world-government. God had declared that during these "times" he would deal very differently with his covenant people from his previous dealings. He would walk contrary to them and would scatter them among the heathen (Gentiles); and they should be under the domination of their enemies, etc. It is a matter of history that the Jews have indeed ever since been oppressed by the other nations, "without a king," in full harmony with what was foretold by the Lord. This experience has been favorable to Israel as well as unfavorable. It has not been merely a chastisement for their sins. It has been an experience which the Lord has given them for their good.

"BEFORE I WAS AFFLICTED I WENT ASTRAY"

"During these 'seven times,' then, the Jews have had severe tribulation and discipline. All of God's people, of every age, have needed chastisements for their correction and development, some more and some less. God says to spiritual Israel, 'For what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? If ye be without chastisement, then are ye bastards [spurious] and not sons.' (Hebrews 12:8) And so it has been with the house of servants, natural Israel. Because they were God's covenant people, therefore he dealt with them; and he has really given them, during these 2520 years, experiences which will prove favorable to each of them as will incline to do right. Those bitter experiences proved so favorable that when Jesus came they, as a people, were the holiest in the world; and at that time they had suffered only a small portion of these 'seven times.'"

So we find that the preaching of the Gospel by our Lord and his apostles found about five hundred of the Jews ready to believe and accept Jesus as Messiah. And soon afterwards, just after Pentecost, there were quite a number of thousands who believed. These, we are told, were Israelites indeed in whom there was no guile. It is very remarkable that there was so large a number in Israel ready to receive Messiah. This would not have been the case had they not been passing through disciplinary experiences. These experiences were all such as would tend to keep them separate from the Gentiles, keep them from mixing with any of the peoples of earth.

If the Jews had prospered under the various governments—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome—they might have intermingled with these other peoples and have ceased to be Jews altogether. And the same is true of their posterity since their national overthrow under Titus, A. D. 70. In God's providence the Jews have continued to have such tribulations throughout this Gospel age as to have kept them separate from the rest of the world; and thus their minds have been

kept in that condition of humility in which they will be best prepared for the Lord's service, when the time of their complete restoration to favor shall come.

Our thought is that when the proper time arrives the Israelites will be more ready for the kingdom than any other nation. The afflictions through which they have passed, their obedience to the law, etc., will have prepared them for the kingdom. We are not, therefore, to consider this long period of their suffering and affliction merely as tribulation, as punishment. For their ultimate good the Jews were to be trodden down of the Gentiles until the full of Gentile domination.

ISRAEL'S GREAT REGATHERING

St. Paul tells us that just as soon as the Gospel church shall be completed, God's favor will return to the Jews—return in the full sense. "Blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles [the full predestined number of the church to be gathered from the Gentile nations] be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved. As it is written, There shall come out of Zion [the glorified Gospel church, spiritual Zion] the Deliverer [The Christ, Head and body, Jesus and his bride], and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob [natural Israel]; for this is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins."—Romans 11:1-33.

The Lord purposed to take away all sins—the sins of Israel, the sins of those who were to constitute the Gospel church, and the sins of the whole world. For this cause Christ was manifested, for this cause he died. This cancellation, or doing away with the sins of the whole world, will progress as each shall recognize the heavenly gift of forgiveness and obey the government.

The orthodox Jews, those who still hold to the teachings of the law and the prophets, and have faith in God, will be the first to receive the blessings of the new age. "As concerning the Gospel, they are enemies for your [the church's] sakes; but as touching the election [the natural election], they are beloved for the fathers' sakes." So, then, this condition of affliction in which the Jews have been throughout the Gospel age, in addition to the overthrow of their nation in the year 70 A. D., has really been a favor from God. All the tribulation through which this people have passed during the entire "seven times" of chastisement will be finally found to have been to their advantage, preparing them for the blessings of Messiah's kingdom. The church will be first in the kingdom, natural Israel with the ancient worthies at their head will be the second. Subsequently all nations will come into divine favor and blessing, becoming members of Israel. All will be blessed through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

"DOOR" PROBABLY NOT YET CLOSED

Question.—Would there be any prospect for one who consecrates at this time to be of the "bride" class, or has the call now ceased?

Answer.—We make a distinction between the end of the public call and the shutting of the door. We understand that the public call ended when a sufficient number had been invited and had accepted the invitation—in 1881. But of these invited and accepted ones there was still to be a testing. Only those enduring loyalty to the end will be finally counted in as victors. Others, not proving wholly loyal to their covenant in their daily lives, will in time be dropped from the list, which would mean that they had not been running faithfully. This would continually make vacancies to be filled. But such a filling of vacancies would not require a new call, but merely a permission for one to enter as one went out.

Our thought is that a large number of those who consecrated prior to 1881 failed to "make good." It is our thought that you are still in time to make your consecration, with every reason for hoping that you may make your calling and election sure by zealous faithfulness in sacrificing earthly interests in favor of the heavenly.

In any event, the most reasonable thing for any of us to do would be to give ourselves wholly to the Lord, just as soon as we realize our imperfection and the Lord's sufficiency. We should be glad to have him as our care-taker, regardless of what reward he would give. We should be sure that so great and so generous a King as God would give good gifts to all who are his. In other words, after the little flock is completed, the Lord will be glad to bless in some other manner others who have the spirit of obedience and sacrifice.

QUEEN OF SHEBA VISITS SOLOMON

AUGUST 1.—1 KINGS 10:1-10, 13.

KING SOLOMON'S RENOWN—A DISTINGUISHED VISITOR—SOLOMON'S GREAT ENGINEERING AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATS—HIS LITERARY ATTAINMENTS—"THE HALF WAS NOT TOLD"—"A GREATER THAN SOLOMON IS HERE"—RICHES OF DIVINE FAVOR.

"Wisdom is better than rubies."—Proverbs 8:11.

In answer to King Solomon's prayer for wisdom, God promised him both wisdom and riches that would make him world-famous. By the middle of his reign King Solomon had accomplished marvels for his nation. Its fame spread to every land. He was known as the wise king, the peaceful king, the rich king.

We may suppose that the visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon was about the middle of his reign—after he had been manifesting his wisdom for twenty years. She came, it is supposed, a journey of 1,500 miles, with quite a large retinue of servants and camels, and with valuable presents, gold and Arabian perfumes. Our lesson gives the queen's own statement of her object in coming to see King Solomon, and of how she found the facts to be more than double all of her anticipations and all the stories that had been told respecting King Solomon's wisdom and riches and the prosperity of his kingdom.

THE WONDERS OF SOLOMON

The Temple of the Lord, the materials of which his father David had prepared for him years before, was one of the first marvels of King Solomon's reign. Its beauty and its cost as a religious edifice were a world marvel. Then the king's own palace and the corridor, or ascent which led from his house to the Temple, were marvelous for that time, and indeed for any time until the wonders of engineering and architecture brought forward during the past century, which is noted in the Bible as the period of God's preparation for Messiah's kingdom.—Nahum 2:3.

Another great engineering feat of King Solomon was called the Pools of Solomon—the system of water supply for his capital, Jerusalem. These pools were connected by covered aqueducts, the first known in history. Additionally, he built strongholds or fortresses throughout his kingdom, for its defense against invaders. Furthermore, he extended the boundaries of his kingdom to the full limits set by the Lord prophetically long before. (Genesis 15:18) This brought his kingdom down to the seacoast. Near Joppa (Jaffa) he had a harbor for ships, which is now completely cut off from the sea, and, having gradually filled up with earth, has become a beautiful orange grove.

But his largest port of entry was at the city of Tyre—not in his own domain. He did business through the king of Tyre; and unitedly their ships traversed the Red Sea, the Mediterranean, etc., bringing commerce from all parts of the world, and affording good facilities for importing goods not produced in Palestine. It was through this means that King Solomon became so very rich that figuratively it was said that the precious metals became as common as stones in Jerusalem.

A ROYAL VISITOR

Busied with these enterprises, and at heart loyal to God, Solomon's reign, by the time of the Queen of Sheba's visit, seems to have been a most wonderful one. Later, satisfied with the blessings of the present life, the king seems to have been less wise and less a man after God's own heart and less thoughtful for his people. It is difficult, especially for the poor, to realize how great are the temptations of the rich and the danger that even a wise man may become foolish through the gratification of every desire of his heart. Incidentally, we should not forget King Solomon's literary achievements. He wrote three thousand proverbs and a thousand songs. Surely the Lord did for him to the full all that he had promised.

It was this great King Solomon that the Queen of Sheba visited, with presents of gold and spices, desiring to learn to a certainty respecting his wonderful wisdom and skill. Her declaration was that the rumors which had reached her were less than half of the reality which she beheld and heard. She had questions to ask, probably respecting God and the future life; for apparently she recognized in Solomon more than human wisdom, and accredited to him wisdom from on high. She exclaimed, "Blessed be Jehovah thy God, which delighteth in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel! Because Jehovah loved Israel forever, therefore made he thee king to do judgment and justice. Happy are thy men, happy these thy servants, which stand continually before thee and hear thy wisdom." "And King Solomon gave unto the Queen of Sheba all of her desire, whatsoever she asked; besides which, he gave her of his royal bounty"—a present. So she returned to her own country with her retinue.

"A GREATER THAN SOLOMON"

Jesus remarked on the story of our lesson, and marveled that there were no more to appreciate himself and the wonderful lessons which he set forth respecting the kingdom of God. (Matthew 12:42) For people to travel a long distance merely to know about the wisdom of God such as King Solomon possessed, would imply that if it were known that a still wiser one could be conferred with, he would be sought; and if it should be known that this wiser one was heir to the world, and that he was seeking a bride for his joint-heirship, how many might be expected to hasten to him and to accept the generous proposal!

This is exactly the condition of things. God's Son, according to the divine program, is selecting a bride class. To be acceptable as a member of this class, we must hear of how the wisdom of God centers in Jesus, how he is the Father's agent and representative in all the work of creation, past, present and future. Additionally, we must be so thoroughly impressed with this matter that we would leave all to go to him to prove the matter for ourselves, to be convinced. Thus coming to Jesus, we are sure to be accepted, not merely that we might ask, as the queen did, for certain blessings, but that the King would enter into a covenant of espousal.

The fact that not all are attracted to the Lord is the basis for our opportunity; for the Scriptures declare that the bride of the Lamb is foreordained of God. The first opportunity to be of this elect company was given to the natural seed of Abraham. Had they accepted their privileges, the church would have been completed in Jesus' day; but, as the Bible tells us, the Jews knew not the time of their visitation—did not appreciate who was with them—the Greater than Solomon. (Luke 19:44) They did not inquire for the kingdom nor for the terms of membership. They crucified the Prince of Life, unwittingly.

Nevertheless, a wonderfully large part of that little nation, as "Israelites indeed," accepted Jesus, giving themselves wholly to him—surrendering their wills. Then the nation was set aside temporarily while the door of this high calling to membership with Christ was thrown open to the Gentiles. The unreadiness of the Gentiles to receive the message of God is indicated by the fact that it has required all the eighteen centuries since to complete the elect number which, apparently, is only 144,000 altogether, "out of every nation, people, kindred and tongue."

THE WISEST KING MISLED

AUGUST 8.—1 KINGS 12:1-24.

ISRAEL'S WISEST KING BECAME MOST FOOLISH—DISSATISFACTION AMONGST THE PEOPLE—JERUSALEM FAVORED AT THE EXPENSE OF THE NATION—KING SOLOMON'S SON AND SUCCESSOR—THE REVOLT OF THE TEN TRIBES—THE KINGDOMS REUNITED AFTER THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY.

"Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."—Proverbs 16:18.

Great as King Solomon was, the latter part of his reign was less wonderful and less creditable than the first half. Although no rebellion took place during his time, nevertheless dissatisfaction was felt. The king rested upon the marvels of the early part of his reign, became more and more interested in foreign affairs, and multiplied the number of his wives and of his troubles. The wealth of the nation, represented in the great public improvements, was really public wealth, in which all the people were interested; but the subsequent greater attention to personal aggrandizement and to

favoritism of the court was not in the interest of the people as a whole, but merely favorable to certain favored classes.

Although no rebellion was made against King Solomon, nor even protests, so far as the records show, nevertheless the people concluded that they would have a change in the kingdom during the reign of Solomon's successor, his son Rehoboam. This dissatisfaction was mainly with the ten tribes. The two tribes, in whose territory was the capital city, were satisfied with the great improvements which had come to them. King Solomon's capital city had been favored out of all pro-

portion to the remainder of the country, in its public improvements. Israelites of all the other tribes had shared in a general conscription of labor at a comparatively small compensation; and they felt that justice had not been rendered them.

THE KINGDOM DIVIDED

For these reasons, the coming of King Rehoboam to the throne was the signal for a protest and for a demand that the king guarantee the people against oppression—a demand very similar to that of the British public in connection with the Magna Charta. The demand of the Israelites was made at the time of the king's coronation—a time when all the tribes were supposed to participate in acknowledging their loyalty to the king. Then came the representatives of the ten tribes, with Jeroboam as a leader, saying, "Thy father Solomon made our yoke grievous; now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father and the heavy yoke which he put upon us lighter, and we will serve thee."

The young king bade them depart for three days and then come again. When he conferred with the old men of the kingdom, asking what he should do, they replied, "If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and will serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then will they be thy servants forever." But this advice was not fully satisfactory to young King Rehoboam; so he inquired of his personal friends, younger men of his acquaintance. These gave opposite advice, saying, "Thus shalt thou speak unto this people: My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins; and now, whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father has chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions"—whips with metal pieces at the end of the lash.

The thought of the younger men and of King Rehoboam, who agreed with them, was that if the king would yield, it would be merely the starting of rebellious demands which eventually would be unendurable. Their thought, therefore, was that the people should be intimidated, threatened. But the ten tribes under the leadership of Jeroboam were not intimidated. They withdrew, refusing to participate in the anointing of Rehoboam as their king. Only the representatives of two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, remained loyal to the king.

Thus the kingdom of Israel was divided. Thereafter the ten tribes maintained the title kingdom of Israel, and the two tribes were called the kingdom of Judah, for over five hundred years—until the time of the return from Babylonian captivity of so many of all Israel as had respect to the divine promises.

Since the captivity, the name Israel has stood for the entire twelve tribes, as at first, being so used by Jesus and the Apostle; and the name Jews was similarly used for all in covenant relationship with God. The great majority never returned, but continued to live in the various provinces of Babylon throughout the world. Some of them, rejecting circumcision and dropping faith in God, were disowned of God and thus became like the remainder of the Gentile world. But others of them, remaining loyal to the Lord, and going up to Jerusalem annually to the feast, as directed by the Lord's Word, continued to be known as members of "the twelve tribes scattered abroad." Many of these were brought into contact with the Truth in the days of the Apostles.

"PRIDE GOETH BEFORE DESTRUCTION"

Lessons from the past are valuable today. Pride has been a general guide for the world which has accomplished much harm. The wealthy and those in power have ever feared the poor, so that nearly all the blessings of life which the latter have obtained have come to them only through strictest demands and threats, and little voluntarily. We are not wise enough to say that the worldly-wise have always erred in judgment in this matter. It is true that the poor and less favored are inclined to make unreasonable demands; but who can say that greater confidence in them on the part of the wealthy would not have worked general benefit? Who can say that the world might not have been further advanced had more confidence in the masses been displayed, and a greater willingness to give them even-handed justice and a larger share in the fruits of life?

The answer of King Rehoboam to the ten tribes reminds us of the present attitude of many of the learned and wealthy toward the masses. They seem to think that others will gain their cause for them; and that a recognition of the rights of the people, after the manner of the Golden Rule, would be showing the white feather, and lead on to disastrous demands wholly unendurable.

JUSTICE THE GOLDEN RULE

All will agree that the wise men advised King Rehoboam properly, to the effect that a ruler should be the servant of his people; and that if he so does faithfully, his kingdom would be enduring and his people would be blessed. Their advice amounted to an admonition that the king should observe the Golden Rule—that he should do to his people and for them as he would that they should do to him, were their conditions reversed. The Golden Rule, laid down by the great Head of Christianity, is despised and rejected as impracticable; but we hold that it has not been given a trial. Those who have had the power have always feared to trust the Golden Rule in their dealings with the people. Political parties, clamoring for something like the Golden Rule, have time and again climbed into power, only to refuse to use the rule after gaining the opportunity, contending that the conditions made it impossible.

Soon, however, the Golden Rule will have a world-wide test, and will demonstrate that it is the only rule by which human happiness can be permanently secured. This is the promise of the Bible, which tells us that Messiah's kingdom will give the world compulsory education along the lines of the Golden Rule for a thousand years. The Lord, through the prophets, the apostles and Jesus himself, testifies to the success of the Golden Rule—that it will bring in everlasting righteousness, peace, joy, blessing; and that God's favor will be upon those who thus conform to his law, giving them ultimately deliverance from sin, sickness, pain, death, and bringing the whole world of mankind to glorious human perfection, utterly destroying those who will refuse to be governed by the Golden Rule.

The result will be the glorious condition which God at the first proposed to Father Adam, but which he neglected and forfeited by disobedience. The death penalty upon Adam and his race, which has brought all our sicknesses, travails and death, has been offset by the Redeemer's sacrifice of himself, the just for the unjust; and the glorious kingdom arrangements already referred to are to be the result.

HOW TO VIEW DENOMINATIONALISM

BELOVED WATCH TOWER BRETHREN:—

By nature I was always weak, timid and fearful, but as the truth of the Lord's Word has entered my mind and heart it has given me a courage which is entirely foreign to my nature. That is but one of the ways in which the truth has made me free.

This was recently impressed upon my mind very forcefully by a conversation I had on the train with a stranger. He was apparently a minister, although he did not say so, nor did I ask him. But in the usual ministerial way he made an attack upon Brother Russell and the cause for which he stands.

This led to an extended conversation with him, in the course of which he asked me: "What opinion do you people have of our great denominations?" I said, "Are you really desirous of having that question answered?" "Yes," he said.

"I replied, 'Then you shall certainly have your wish. But possibly if it were answered very directly you might charge that it was influenced by prejudice, so I am going to approach the matter from a different standpoint.

"My home is in Philadelphia, and as you know, the prominent evangelist, 'Billy' Sunday, is conducting a long series of meetings there. My father is sending me the daily papers in which are published reports of his sermons, etc., and I have been following the same very carefully.

"Practically all the Protestant churches in the city are behind Mr. Sunday; the papers stating that as many as four hundred ministers were sometimes on the platform with him. So of all men Mr. Sunday is surely qualified to speak for these denominations. Besides which his large experience with them should enable him to say with accuracy just what are the conditions prevailing in these churches.

"In some of his sermons I note that he has a very poor opinion of the spirituality of these organizations. He scores the ministers because they have no faith. He condemns their neglect of Bible study. He says the theological seminaries are turning out infidels.

"He refers to the large amount of saloon property that belongs to church members. He enumerates all kinds of worldly doings which go on in these denominations. He would