

## HOW ST. PETER WAS PUNISHED FOR DENYING HIS LORD

*"Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?"—John 21:15-17.*

The context shows that these words were addressed by the Redeemer to St. Peter on the occasion of his third manifestation to his disciples after his resurrection. This was presumably three or four weeks after the Master's resurrection from the dead. His manifestations to the women on the morning of his resurrection and his later manifestations to the two as they went to Emmaus are evidently not counted, but the manifestation the same evening in the upper room, when all the disciples except Thomas and Judas were present, is counted the first. And the manifestations a week later, Thomas being present, is counted the second.

The delay in giving this third manifestation was evidently for the purpose of testing the faith of the Apostles and of leading them to reach a conclusion respecting their future course, which Jesus wished to correct. So far as we can understand the record at least two Sundays passed without any further manifestation of Jesus to his disciples, and then, giving up hope, they decided to return to the fishing business and did so. The journey to Galilee and the resumption of business presumably took another week.

During all those thirty days the mental attitude of all the apostles and the other disciples can be better imagined than described. They were perplexed, they had indeed had evidences of the Master's resurrection; they had had the Scriptures called to their attention which proved that this was necessary, and that God had previously so arranged. They had hoped for further conferences with Jesus and that he would have told them definitely what to do.

Instead, left to themselves, the disciples were thoroughly disheartened. They had left all to follow him, to tell the people that he was the Son of God, the long-promised Messiah, and that he would soon set up his kingdom, which would bring blessings, primarily to Israel and, secondary, through Israel, to all the families of the earth in harmony with the Abrahamic Covenant. Now apparently all of these hopes were dashed, frustrated. How foolish they thought it would seem for them to try to convince the people that a man, crucified as a malefactor, as a blasphemer, was indeed the Messiah! How foolish it would seem to tell of his resurrection! They felt that they could do nothing else than abandon the ministry as a lost cause; and the resumption of the fishing business was the logical conclusion.

### THEY TOILED ALL THE NIGHT

Their first night was a discouraging one—they caught nothing. It looked indeed as though God was punishing them for the course they had taken in becoming disciples of Jesus—that everything was going wrong. But not so; they were merely being taught needed lessons.

In the morning they beheld a stranger on the shore who beckoned and shouted to know if they had any fish for sale. They replied, No, they had made no catch. The stranger suggested casting the net on the other side of the boat. And, although the suggestion seemed a foolish one, having been so unsuccessful, yet they did so, and immediately the net was filled with fishes! It did not require long for them to learn the lesson. They knew instinctively that the unknown stranger upon the shore was none other than their Master. They remembered a very similar experience at the time they were first called to leave their nets and to become fishers of men.

All interest had just centered in the fishing business, but now boats and fish and nets all lost their value in the estimation of these fishermen. Here was their risen Lord, for whose third appearance they had been waiting now nearly three weeks. Fearing that the Master would disappear, even before he could get to him, St. Peter plunged into the sea and swam ashore. To his surprise the stranger already had fish and had them cooked, and all were invited to join in the breakfast on the shore of Galilee.

The stranger had not the clothing by which they had known their Lord, neither did he have the marks of the nails in his hands and feet, that they might thus identify him. This was a different manifestation. They knew him as did those with whom he walked to Emmaus, who recognized him in the blessing of the bread, and not by his features or clothing or wounds. They recognized that none other than he could have performed such a miracle. They did not ask who he was; they felt a restraint; as we read, "None of them durst ask who he was," but all knew that he was the Lord.

### "LOVEST THOU ME MORE?"

The stranger addressed St. Peter particularly, saying, "Lovest thou me more than these"—these boats and nets,

etc., pertaining to the fishing business? St. Peter answered, "Lord, Thou knowest that I affectionately love thee." He used a word expressing fondness of love. Jesus replied, "Feed my lambs."

Then came the question a second time, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" A great pressure was felt by St. Peter. Why did the Master so particularly question his love. Why did he put this question more to him than to the others? Was it because he had been the first of the disciples to suggest the resumption of the fishing business? Was he to blame for this? But he answered, "Lord, thou knowest that I affectionately love thee." Jesus this time replied, "Tend my sheep." For the third time Jesus said to St. Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, dost thou affectionately love me?" Here Jesus used the same word that St. Peter had used, as though he questioned the affection and depth of St. Peter's love. Ah! the third time must have sent the memory of St. Peter back to the scene in Caiaphas' Judgment Hall, when he denied his Master the third time, even with cursing. And now Jesus for the third time had asked him respecting his love and whether it was really a love of affection! St. Peter's choking reply was, "Lord, thou knowest all things! Thou knowest that I affectionately love thee!" The Lord's reply was, "Feed my sheep."

In harmony with these words of the Master to St. Peter the chief work of his followers has been to minister to the needs of the spirit-begotten sheep. It is in full harmony with this that St. Paul, addressing the elders of Ephesus, counseled that they "feed the flock of God, which he had purchased with the blood of his own Son." There is a point here that perhaps is too frequently overlooked. If all of the Lord's followers could realize that the message to St. Peter is the same as comes to all of us, perhaps it would make a change in most of our preaching.

### OUR MISTAKEN METHODS

Have not Christians in general overlooked this important lesson, namely, that the chief work of the ministers and under-shepherds of the Lord's flock during this age is to "feed the flock"? Is it not true that comparatively little feeding is being done? On the contrary, the thought usually received by new converts is, Now you are saved; go, evangelize, and bring others to Christ—especially bring money, for with plenty of it we can convert the world. Work for Jesus by soliciting funds for church expenses, extension, etc., etc.

If the inquirer has thoughts or feelings is it not too often the case that his instructors know not how to answer them, but merely say, "Stop thinking, and go to work"? Alas, that this is so true! The "lambs" should be fed until they become "sheep." The sheep should be tended, cared for, guided, instructed, and the sheep should also be fed with the stronger meat than that which the lambs could appropriate. St. Paul gives this thought when on one occasion he urges his hearers to desire "the sincere milk of the Word that they may grow thereby."

But few seem to copy the great St. Paul in respect to their methods. Few seem to realize and apply to themselves the Master's words to St. Peter, "Feed my lambs," and "my sheep." As a consequence, the church of Christ is in a languishing condition. Many, sincere at heart, know not what they believe. Many would find it impossible to follow St. Peter's admonition, "Be ready to give a reason for the hope that is within you, with meekness and reverence."—1 Peter 3:15.

### REASONS FOR THE NEGLECT OF THE DOCTRINES OF CHRIST

There are two reasons which have led up to the neglect of "the doctrines of Christ"—the teachings of the Bible. These two reasons fully explain why so many are telling new believers, Never mind the doctrines of Christ, but go out and convert somebody.

The first of these reasons is the erroneous thought which gained ascendancy during the dark ages, namely, that from Pentecost until the second coming of Jesus is the time allotted by the Heavenly Father for the world's conversion, and that this is the commission which he gives to his people, and if the world be not converted the responsibility for their eternal torture will fall upon his people.

All of this is a mistake. Not a word of Scripture tells that the church was commissioned to convert the world before the second coming of the Lord. Quite to the contrary, the Scriptures show that at the Lord's second coming the world will be unconverted. The Apocalypse particularly tells us that when the Lord at his second coming shall establish

his kingdom, the nations will be angry and divine wrath will come upon them, thereby introducing the great "time of trouble" with which this age is to end, according to the prophetic Word.

These testimonials do not signify that holiness will perish, nor that all of the Lord's people will be unfaithful, but they do signify that the world in general will not be the Lord's people; they will still be enemies, Gentiles, unconverted. Nor are we urging that the church has nothing whatever to do with the world. Quite to the contrary; while she has not been given the mission of converting the world in the present age—while that work remains for her to do in the coming age in connection with the Lord and his kingdom—nevertheless she was commissioned to do a work of witnessing in the present age.

The church's witness was to be the telling of the message of God's grace to those having an ear to hear, although they be but few. Secondarily, she was to witness to the world by her faithfulness to the principles of righteousness, and thus to show forth the praises of him who called her "out of darkness into his marvelous light." But this witnessing was not in order to the converting of the world, but in order to gather out of the world the number necessary to complete the divinely foreordained elect bride of Christ.

#### THE SECOND REASON

As the first error was in respect to the world's conversion to the Lord, the second error was in respect to what would happen to the world if they were not converted to the Lord. When the erroneous idea gained credence that everyone who does not accept the invitation and become a member of the bride of Christ is to be eternally tormented, can we wonder that it led many good people to a frenzy of error respecting what should be done to save their families and neighbors and the heathen millions from a supposed eternity of torture?

It was because of this supposed agency that those coming to the belief in Jesus were exhorted not to stop to feed and grow strong in the Lord and to study his Word, but to be moved by a frenzy of zeal to bring others to the Lord. This frenzy in turn led to most unreasonable teachings and practices, which we are only now gradually getting rid of as we realize that a great mistake was made.

How strange that we did not stop to think of the absurdity of our position and how it misrepresented the Heavenly Father, in a most detestable light! How strange that any should ever think that when the Heavenly Father sent out the call to those who have the hearing ear, to joint-heirship with Jesus Christ their Lord, he would consign to eternal torment any who would decline to accept the admittedly stringent rules and conditions appertaining to this "call"—the "narrow way" of the footsteps of Jesus—self-denial, etc.

Well do the Scriptures assure us that the saints "wrestle not with flesh and blood merely," but rather "with wicked spirits in high positions" of influence. (Eph. 6:12.) Well does the Apostle tell us that it is the god of this age who

hath blinded the minds of those who believe not; that he is preventing the light from shining unto them. (2 Cor. 4:4.) Well can we see how he put light for darkness and darkness for light during the dark ages.

#### ANOTHER LESSON WE MAY LEARN

We must not leave the text without calling to memory a most wonderfully instructive lesson concerning the proper way to reprove and rebuke our brethren when the same is surely necessary. So far as the record shows, the three inquiries which our Lord made of St. Peter respecting his love for him were the only rebukes ever given him as an offset, or punishment for his shameful denial of the Master on the night in which he was betrayed.

Had many of us been in the Master's place we would have felt that it was necessary to make St. Peter very humbly apologize before we would have anything further to do with him. We would have been inclined to speak of his weakness, of his ingratitude, of how he knew better, etc., etc. Our sense of justice would, in many instances, have entirely overshadowed our sense of mercy and sympathy. But not so with the Master. He knew the loyalty of St. Peter's heart. He knew that he had already gone out and wept bitterly over the matter. He knew what a sense of shame would be upon him and how much courage it would mean for him to think at all of meeting the Master whom he had denied.

Surely it was on account of his sympathy for St. Peter and this appreciation of the tendency he would have to become entirely discouraged that led our Lord to mention St. Peter first amongst the Apostles on the morning of his resurrection, saying to Mary, to whom he first appeared, "Go and tell my disciples, and Peter"—don't let Peter think that he is an outcast. Let him know that I think of him and love him and sympathize with him and have forgiven him, because I knew he did it under stress.

#### WE SHOULD COPY THE MASTER'S METHODS

And if our Lord and Master has set us such an example of benevolence and forgiveness without request, how are we learning this lesson? To what extent do we forgive others their trespasses and to what extent do we go more than half way to let them know that we harbor no resentful feelings toward them? To what extent do we send word that we think of them kindly, generously? And when the appropriate time comes and it is proper for something to be said can we not take a lesson from the Redeemer's loving forbearance and gentleness in his merely asking the erring one if he had a proper kind of love, and when he confesses special love, then to ask him if he is sure that he has the special love?

No doubt our success as the Master's servants in feeding the brethren, the flock, and helping instead of hindering them, will be in proportion as we remember and copy his style and methods. So, then, while feeding his flock, let us have continually before us the great Shepherd's example of how the flock should be dealt with.

### "I COME TO DO THY WILL"

*"Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all." "A body hast thou prepared me."—Heb. 10:9, 10, 5.*

In the context from which our text is taken the Apostle speaks of the "better sacrifices"—plural—and the "one offering"—singular. From his statement we feel justified in saying that St. Paul is contrasting the antitypical Day of Atonement with the typical Atonement day, on which was made one sin-offering on behalf of all the people, but consisting of two sacrifices—first, the bullock for the priestly tribe of Levi, and then the goat for the other tribes of Israel.

In those offerings which were made year by year continually, God had taken no pleasure, for they did not satisfy or please him in making satisfaction for sin. They were not the divine expression of what was pleasing to God in the fullest sense. "A body hast thou prepared me" "for the suffering of death." This "body" was the human body of Jesus, which, through immaculate conception, was holy, innocent, undefiled, separate from sinners and, therefore, capable of being the ransom-price for the sins of the whole world. But it is also true that God has provided a larger body.

#### "JESUS, WHOM THOU PERSECUTEST"

This larger body that God has provided is composed of human beings, whom he drew and called to be members of

this body of Christ, which is the church. This drawing and calling was to the natural man and not to the new creature. When Jesus accepted these members of his body he accepted them as new creatures. The invitation to them was before they became new creatures. When, therefore, he accepted those whom the Father drew and called, he accepted them as members, or representatives, so that they might be his representatives throughout this age. From this standpoint he spoke when upbraiding Saul of Tarsus, saying, "Saul Saul, why persecutest thou me?" (Acts 9:4) So Jesus in the flesh (represented by his followers) was still in the world long after Jesus, as the Head of the church, had ascended up on high. Thus we see that the sufferings of the church all down the age have, in this sense, been the sufferings of Jesus.

The Apostle speaks of himself as "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus." (2 Cor. 4:10.) All of the followers of the Lord Jesus bear about in their body the dying of the Lord Jesus. As Jesus had experiences in sufferings, so have all of his disciples experience with him in the suffering of this time, and communion with him in spirit. "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."—2 Cor. 4:16.

**OBEDIENCE TO THE EXTENT OF SACRIFICE**

We refer to our text again, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God"—everything written in the Book. Because born under the Law, Jesus was obligated to keep the law. There was no sacrifice in keeping the law. To do whatever is commanded is not sacrifice, but obedience. The law did not say that one should love his neighbor better than himself. But Jesus went beyond this law of justice and laid down his life in behalf of the church and of the world. Because he was thus obedient to the Father to the extent of keeping, not only everything in the law, but everything written in the Book, in the Bible—on this account he was a sacrifice, and was afterward raised up to the divine Majesty on high.

The things written in the Book were written in types and shadows, in allegories. To illustrate: Moses lifted up the brazen serpent. This is a picture illustrating how our Lord Jesus would be lifted up. The lamb slain at the Passover season is also a type of Jesus, the slain Lamb. The Day of Atonement sacrifices are also pictures. And as the Lamb was led to the slaughter, so he did not resist.

**"THE HEAVENS WERE OPENED"**

We are not informed how much our Lord knew, at the time of his consecration, respecting the divine purpose. In his boyhood days our Lord knew that he had come into the world to do the will of the Father. But just what that will was he did not fully know. It was all written in the Book, but the Book was sealed; and until that will was revealed it could not be comprehended. He could not know until after he had received the holy Spirit; and his consecration must be made before he could receive that holy Spirit. Hence at the time he offered himself at baptism he could not understand the "deep things." As St. Paul says, no natural man can perceive the things of God: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14.) Jesus could not know the depths and importance of all the symbols which God had written in that very form for the special purpose of keeping them secret, until he had been begotten of the Spirit.

We understand that our Lord was the slain Lamb in the divine purpose just as soon as he consecrated his life at Jordan and had bestowed upon him the begetting of the holy spirit. We read that immediately after he had gone up out of the water the heavenly things were opened unto him. Under the influence of that enlightenment he went into the wilderness and remained there fasting for forty days, that he might understand the will of God. But his consecration was to fulfill everything written in the Book. He was to be the great Messiah, the great Mediator between God and men. He made the full consecration of his life to this end. That consecration was accepted. It meant the fulfillment of all the details of the whole plan.

**CONSECRATION MUST PRECEDE UNDERSTANDING OF TYPES**

As before suggested, all these things written in the Book concerning our Lord were not understood by him until the due time, which began when the holy Spirit came to him. Then, while he was in the wilderness, he began to see and to apply the various lessons to himself. He had contracted to do everything written in the Book before he understood the meaning of these types. Evidently this was the divine intention and there was a reason behind it.

Here was God's will, not written in commands, but in types and shadows, that the one who was to fulfill these things might see in them, not a divine command, but the divine will. "Lo, I come to do thy will!" I am ready to do thy will at any cost! Now the Apostle says that when our Lord thus came and presented himself to God, "He taketh away the first (that is, he setteth aside the type), that he might establish the second," the antitype. The type was the serpent lifted up; the antitype was himself "lifted up." The type was the lamb slain; the antitype was himself slain. The type was the sacrifice of the Day of Atonement; himself and the adopted body, the church, constitute the "better sacrifices."

After his return from the wilderness, our Lord began the work of taking away the first (the types). Part of the work was completed in the three years and a half of his earthly ministry. But the work is not yet finished. Coming down to our time, the Apostle says, "By the which will we are sanctified." (Heb. 10:10.) What will is this? The same will that our Lord had. He said, "I come to do thy will"—not merely thy law. Now we who are the church say that we are glad to follow him. We are glad to be living sacrifices. God does not command us to be sacrifices,

**THE CHURCH SET APART FOR SERVICE**

The Apostle says, "I beseech you, brethren"—I put before you the fact that it is well worthy of your attention to present yourselves living sacrifices. Thus, by having the same will, the same mind, this same disposition that is in Christ, we are sanctified, we are set apart. We do not set ourselves apart. The Lord Jesus sets us apart. He it is who imputes to us his merit in order that the Father may accept the sacrifice and beget us to the new nature as members of his body. The Apostle says, "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (for all being supplied). (Heb. 10:10) What does this signify? We answer that the statement is true. The literal body of Jesus was the basis of our acceptance with God. The church is the mystical body of Jesus: "Why persecutest thou me?" "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest."

The offering of this body of Jesus has progressed throughout the eighteen hundred years; and it is only as we are offered and only by being offered that we can become members and attain to joint-heirship with our Lord in the kingdom—"So many of us as were baptized into Christ." (Rom. 6:3) We are not merely baptized into the glorious body of the future, the Messiah, but we are baptized into Jesus that we might share in the death of Jesus, the sacrifice, and share in the glory of Jesus, the Messiah.

**THE BLOOD OF BULLS AND GOATS CAN NEVER TAKE AWAY SINS**

"And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifice, which can never take away sins." (Heb. 10:11) This refers to the fact that the Jewish priest offered the sacrifice continually and yet never accomplished anything with it. "But this Man, when he offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God." (Heb. 10:12) "This Man" is the glorious High Priest, Jesus, the Head, who, after he had offered one sacrifice for sin forever, sat down at the right hand of God.

But his offering was in two parts; the first of which was at Jordan, when he offered up himself; and the second was at Pentecost, when he "appeared in the presence of God for us"—for us living today, as well as for those living then. At this time he accepted the church as joint-sacrificers and offered them; and in offering them he offered the one antitypical goat. So his offerings were really completed at the time of Pentecost. What is he waiting for? The Scriptures say he has sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, waiting for the time to come when his enemies shall be made his footstool.—Heb. 10:13.

Meantime his bride shall have been perfected and joined with him in glory. When that time shall have come, his enemies shall be made his footstool. At the time of his death, we remember, he said, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine, and all mine are thine." (John 17:9, 10) And the promise of the Father to him is, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."—Psa. 2:8.

The Apostle says that he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high waiting until God would make his enemies his footstool. God is not prepared to give him these things until the church is completed. In other words, the church is not a supplemental and additional part of the divine plan. This has been the "mystery hid from ages and generations."—Col. 1:26.

**THE MYSTERY UNFOLDING NOW**

Now, under the revelation of God, we see the unfolding of the mystery, that the church are to be fellow-heirs with our Lord in the glories of the kingdom. Hence, it is the divine purpose for Jesus to wait until the time shall come when the church will have been perfected. This matter of sacrifice is all to be completed during the Gospel age; and this one great Day of Atonement will also be completed. There will be no repetition of the sacrifice.

We remember that in Revelation 5 it is stated that no one was found worthy to open the scroll written within and on the back, and sealed with seven seals; not a soul was worthy. No; "No man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the Book, neither to look thereon." Jehovah had already said to Abraham that he would bless the world, but had not revealed how it was to be done. Then we read that John wept, because God had a great plan, and because no one was to be the recipient of that plan, to reveal it. The angel said, "Weep not; behold, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the Book, and to loose the seven seals

thereof." (Rev. 5:1-6) By this we understand that he was not born with this right, but that he acquired it—he "hath prevailed to open the Book." Therefore, on account of his obedience, God also highly exalted him, giving him dignity, power and honor.

The Lion of the Tribe of Judah was our Lord Jesus, to whom the Book was delivered. It is not due for any believers to understand any of the deep things written in that Book until they have come to the place of consecration. But God does not reveal them to us by his Spirit in the same manner as he revealed them to the Lord Jesus. John said that this is the "Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." "All things are of the Father, and all things are by the Son, and we by him."—Rev. 1:1; 1 Cor. 8:6.

#### "LIGHT SHINING MORE AND MORE UNTO THE PERFECT DAY"

It would not be becoming on our part to speak with positiveness of how much our Lord knew during his earthly ministry. For how could we know except as it was declared? He said that the times and the seasons were not at that time known by any but "the Father only." We cannot doubt that he knows all on that subject now. And if our surmises are correct, we know more on that subject now than our Lord did then.

Doubtless it would be impossible to understand many of the deep things pertaining to the Messianic age long in advance of that period. Daniel tells us that the prophecies relating to the time of the end were closed up, sealed until

the end. (Dan. 12:4, 9) As these things became due to be understood they constituted meat in due season for the household of faith. (Matt. 24:45) For instance, it would be meat in due season in Noah's time to know about the flood; but that information would not be meat in due season today.

So then we are to walk in the light and be guided by the Lord's Word. "For prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the holy Spirit," St. Peter tells us. Again St. Paul says, "These things . . . were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world [ages] are come." (2 Peter 1:21; 1 Cor. 10:11; John 16:7, 13) And our Lord said of the holy Spirit which he would send, that it would "show us things to come." (John 16:7, 13) Thus the pathway of the church all the way down has been one of increasing light.

Our faith does not consist merely in believing in God's personality, God's righteousness. We fully believe in the personality of God, in the power of God. Nevertheless we need to exercise faith in the divine providence in our own case; faith in the fact that God veils things from our mental and spiritual sight at the present time. He allowed things to come to Jesus which might have astonished our Lord if he had not exercised faith. He allowed our Lord to be maligned, slandered—to be crucified. It requires knowledge, faith, for everything that we are called upon to do and to undergo. We believe God; but, are we determined to be loyal to God and to his plan? And are we willing to endure hardship and to sacrifice earthly interests in favor of these heavenly promises?

### "DELIVERED FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FLESH"

During the Gospel age there has been but one condition upon which any may come to the Father. The Lord does not propose many ways, but only one way. "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life"—now. But when the kingdom comes there will be a highway, a more favorable, an easier way, as the Lord states through the Prophet Isaiah. In it there will be no stumbling-stones; it will not be narrow and difficult, but comparatively easy; and throughout Messiah's reign of a thousand years, it will be the way by which the Adamic race may return to God. During that reign the whole world will be assisted, succored and disciplined, that they may be encouraged to go to the very end of the way.

In the present time, the only way is dark, narrow, difficult; the light has not yet begun to shine for the world. The Scriptures represent the church of Christ is this Gospel age as saying, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet." In olden times men had little lanterns which they attached to the toes of their sandals, and as they walked each step would be in the light. So the Lord has been dealing with the church during the Gospel age. The narrow way has been dark; but we have had the "sure word of prophecy," which, as a lamp, shines on the pathway and will shine "more and more unto the perfect day."

When that day comes men will not need the lamp; for then there will be sunlight. Then the knowledge of God will fill the whole earth.

#### SACRIFICE ESSENTIAL TO DISCIPLESHIP

One of the narrowing features of this way is that at the present time no one is accepted of God unless he makes a definite covenant with God. If he does not choose to make that covenant he may think he is a Christian, but he is not. In the world today four hundred million people are counted as Christians. Many have the idea that if they join the church or do some good deed, they thus become followers of Christ. But the Bible very plainly states: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me." (Matt. 16:24) This self-denial and cross-bearing is the sacrifice necessary to discipleship in Christ at the present time.

Many people are not Christians because they have not entered into a covenant with God. The Lord speaks of the class now called to discipleship, saying, "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice"—by a complete consecration of themselves; "Present your bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God, your reasonable service." (Psa. 50:5; Rom. 12:1) If we have been accepted in Christ, if we have been begotten of the holy Spirit, it is because we have entered at this strait gate and upon this narrow way, and have made this covenant of sacrifice to the Lord, giving our

will and all earthly rights to him, that his will may be done in us.

After having entered this strait gate and narrow way, we should continue therein—not necessarily without stumbling, not necessarily without making mistakes; if we can go on ever so falteringly, to the best of our ability and with hearts loyal to the Lord, we shall be granted to sit on his throne—members of his bride class.

#### THE CARES OF THE WORLD OVERCOME MANY

As we are all aware the Bible shows that some who make this consecration, afterward become involved with the world, the cares of this life, and the deceitfulness of riches. These fail to carry out their agreement. Thus they are holding back the very price necessary to make them joint-heirs with our Lord. Whoever rejects the cross will not get the crown. How many people are overcharged with the cares of this life! How many people are being deluded by the deceitfulness of riches!

There was a gentleman with whom the writer was once very intimate; we were like brothers. One day he said, "Brother Russell, I should like very much indeed to be out in the Lord's work and to do some kind of service for the truth, but I have a wife, and I understand that the Lord holds me responsible for the care of my wife. I could not think of going out and leaving her dependent. But if the Lord in his providence should ever send me money so that I could go without my wife's suffering any serious inconvenience, I would be very glad to go out and preach the Gospel." The Lord took him at his word. He was then a bookkeeper; but the Lord opened the way, by the death of a member of the firm, for him to become one of the principal partners in that firm. Without any effort at all he prospered financially until he was worth at least half a million dollars.

One day we said to him, "Brother, we have a very serious matter that weighs on us a great deal." He said, "Tell me what it is and I will assist you, whatever it costs." You see how gracious he was! He thought that we were after his money! Dear friends, we thank God that we have never yet found it necessary to ask for money; and we do not suppose that we ever shall. We said, "Brother, we are in great distress, and no one but you can help us." "Tell me what it is," he replied. We said, "Dear Brother, we desire to call your attention to something which you said several years ago when you were poor." Then we recited our previous conversation as best we could, and said, "The Lord has given you the money; He has done his part; are you ready to do yours?" With streaming eyes he answered, "Brother Russell, I am so bound to my business—hand and foot—that it would be impossible now." The cares of this life, the deceitfulness of riches, according to his own words, had bound

him both hand and foot; but his heart was still loyal to God.

We have no desire to be his judge, but we are inclined to think that dear brother did not get into the kingdom. While we do not know, yet we fear that his being bound "hand and foot" may have stood in his way, though we think that he was truly a child of God. Are we to suppose that because he failed to make that sacrifice which he had agreed to make, he would go down into the second death? We hardly think so. We think that the Lord loved him and that he had a very loyal character. The Lord loves good characters. Our thought is that quite probably the dear fellow will be in the great company; and we are very glad that there will be a great company class.

#### OUR HUMANITY MUST DIE

No one will get into the Little Flock class but those who faithfully lay down their lives in sacrifice to the end of the journey. God foreknew and predestinated that all who are of that class must be copies of his dear Son. If one is not a full copy of our Lord Jesus, if one has not left all to follow him, then that one will not be of the bride class.

The Scriptures mention two classes—the one as a little flock and the other as a great company—both parts of the "church of the first-borns." In the type the priests were members of the tribe of Levi; but there were others of that tribe who were not priests. The Levites as a whole represent, we understand, the church of the first-born ones who will attain the spirit plane of being, but who will form two classes, a "little flock" or priest class, and a "great company" or Levite class.

The voluntary sacrificing of the flesh is for one to give himself of his own free will to the Lord and to submit himself to the Lord Jesus as the great High Priest to carry out for him the work of sacrifice. What of those who make this arrangement and then fail to make the sacrifice? Their earthly life is consecrated; God has given them the holy Spirit of adoption, and has accepted the arrangement whereby they gave up all their earthly rights. Such can never get the world's salvation. They voluntarily gave up all right to life on the human plane. When God gave them the holy Spirit, He accepted the contract, binding on both sides. They will get the heavenly nature or nothing.

#### "DELIVERED OVER TO SATAN"

Those who do not go on to give themselves fully in sacrifice are delivered over to the adversary to buffet them until their flesh shall be destroyed—until these earthly, clinging tendencies which were holding them from full loyalty to God are broken down and their minds become fully submissive and in harmony with God. That which they refused to give voluntarily will be taken away from them.

The only knowledge we have of this matter is from the Apostle's words. St. Paul, addressing the church at Corinth, said that they had amongst them a brother who was not living according to his covenant, but who was living in a measure of sin. The Apostle reprimanded the church for not having done their duty by the brother. Then said he, "I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed . . . to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." (1 Cor. 5:3, 5) If the flesh is not destroyed, the spirit will not be saved, is the Apostle's argument.

This statement gives us an inkling of the Lord's will. In every case it is necessary that the flesh be destroyed. If the will is overcome by the flesh, the result will be the death of the will also; that is, the second death. But if the will desires to be in harmony with the Lord, then, although the enforced destruction of the flesh is not sacrifice, and such are not counted in with the sacrificers, yet they are saved "so as by fire" on the spirit plane, in the day of the Lord Jesus.—1 Cor. 3:15.

Regarding the case that we have mentioned earlier in this article you might ask, Did that Brother lose the knowledge of the truth? We will tell you; for this is a very interesting question.

In this Brother's case we do not know what were the sentiments of his heart, of course, for we are not able to judge those. But he left us and joined the Presbyterian church. Then he joined the Christian Alliance people and tried to believe in faith-healing and to practice it, although he had possessed such knowledge of the truth along these lines. After pressing along the line of faith-healing, etc., he had several attacks of sickness and had to call in a doctor, notwithstanding faith-cures. Finally, after very serious illness lasting a number of weeks, he passed away. We do not know enough about him to say to what extent his mind was turned toward the Lord. We had no opportunity of knowing, for his attitude had more or less cut us off from our previous intimate fellowship.

Another case was called to our attention by a brother who asked us this very question—"Do you think this to be a case of what we might call 'the destruction of the flesh'?" It seemed to us that it was such a case. We cite it:

A brother living in a certain city received the truth and rejoiced in it greatly. He found another brother, with whom he liked to meet and talk about the glad message. He seemed to show the right spirit, just ready for the truth, and it was satisfying to his heart. But his wife was very indignant. She opposed him saying, "Choose between your religion and me; you cannot have both." She put the matter very squarely before him; and he chose his wife. It was only a little while afterwards, as the story came to us, that apparently the Lord put the poor brother where he was very sorry for his choice. He contracted some kind of loathsome disease, and in the midst of his terrible suffering his wife deserted him.

We hope that the Lord did not desert him and that eventually he was forgiven by the Lord; for it looked as if the Lord had taken that brother at his own proposition; that he was really a child of God, but not of the overcoming class. He loved his wife more than the Lord and was not worthy to be a member of the bride class. So apparently he suffered such entire destruction of the flesh as he probably never expected to know. He must have loved his wife a great deal to give the Lord up for her.

Yet she deserted him at a time of great need! Even from the standpoint of the world it would seem wrong for a wife to leave her husband under those conditions. We may readily suppose that the brother came back to the Lord at the closing hours, learning his lesson well, and perhaps making certain promises to the Lord. If so we doubt not that his spirit will be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

## "CONTEND FOR THE FAITH"

*"Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."*—Jude 3.

The contention which the Scriptures reprobate is that of selfishness—contending for place, for power, for our friends against some one else's friends, for our ideas against those of others. And the implication is given that those who are thus contentious will never enter into the kingdom; for this contentious spirit indicates a wrong attitude or condition.

It is one thing, however, to be inveigled into something or to be overtaken in a fault, and quite another thing to contend along selfish lines. Amongst the Lord's people, even in the Apostles' day, there was a tendency at times to fight each other rather than to fight the devil and the spirit of the world and the weaknesses within themselves. The organs of destructiveness and combativeness, which would serve a Christian soldier in good stead if directed against his own weaknesses and blemishes, are sadly out of place when, ignoring his own weaknesses, he merely becomes contentious with the brethren—often over nothing or over questions whose importance he exaggerates, because of his contentious spirit. Such should remember the Scriptural statement that "he

that ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city."—Prov. 16:32.

The Apostle Paul reprehends that misdirection of Christian energy which "bites and devours" one another and warns against it as tending to the destruction of all that is spiritual amongst the Lord's people. Not that the Apostle favored slackness as respects the important principles of divine revelation, for he showed always his determination to contend for righteousness; as one instance of this we recall his own words regarding his rebuke of one of the other apostles, older in the Christian faith than himself—"I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed."

#### COMMENDABLE CONTENTION

But while all of the Lord's people should be on guard against the spirit of contention, watching closely lest anything be done in a biting and devouring manner, instead of manifesting patience and long suffering, brotherly-kindness, love, yet they have enlisted as new creatures, spirit-begotten, to



walk after the Spirit, and they must continually recognize this fact and keep watch that they are always walking in line with the spirit of the truth; and our text tells us of a contention which is not only proper, but necessary for all who are walking in this way. They are to "earnestly contend for the faith"—for the Word of God, for the promises which God has made, for the good things for which God has arranged.

The necessity for this course lies in the fact that this world is no friend to grace; no friend, therefore, to the people of God. Selfishness, which is the spirit of the world, lies on the side opposite to the holy Spirit of love; and our own selfish interests are in line with the world in general. Consequently, no one could properly contend for the faith with a selfish motive, for the "faith once delivered unto the saints" would forbid such a motive and condemn it at once. One reason, undoubtedly, why the Lord has permitted his cause to be in disesteem and subject to the attacks of the world, and particularly of evil spirits in the world, is that he desires to have for his people in this "little flock" a tried people, a people of character. Character implies such fixity of purpose and intention that the individual would fight a "good fight"

against every influence tending to lead away from the Lord's Word and the Lord's brethren.

The world and its theories are in opposition to the saints, therefore, we must contend against the selfish human and devilish arrangements which prevail at the present time. It is possible for one to be contentious in religious matters, and to "earnestly contend," and yet such a course be not contending "for the faith once delivered to the saints." One might be contentious for some pet theory of his own rather than for those principles of righteousness which the Bible inculcates.

Sometimes it might seem like contention for the faith once delivered to the saints for one person to argue with another on Scriptural subjects, and yet his real motive in so doing might be pride. Pride is a part of selfishness; therefore in contending for his own ideas one might be cultivating pride. The contention which God would approve is that earnest desire to have whatever God's Word teaches. We must not contend with the tongue improperly, nor speak slanderously. In all of our contentions we should manifest the fruits of the holy Spirit—gentleness, brotherly-kindness, love. Thus the proper contention would not partake of anger, hatred, malice or strife.

## THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND HER MISSION

There can be no question that the church of Christ is an ecclesia, a body, and that Christ Jesus is the Head of the "church which is his body." (Eph. 1:22, 23) There can be no question that the different members of the church are being called—drawn by selective process—from the world of mankind. The testimony of the Scriptures as to the object of the call seems also to be clear. The Apostle Peter says that the church is a people for a purpose; that is, God has a special object or purpose in selecting the church. They are to "show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light," "that men may see their good works and glorify their Father which is in heaven."—1 Pet. 2:9; Matt. 5:16.

We ask respecting the object of this shining of the light, and the Scriptures answer that it will have an effect upon the world, reproving mankind and setting before them an example of better living, better thinking. We ask whether this is the ultimate object of the call. The Scriptures answer that it is not; that the church is called out to be a privileged people and to become joint-heirs with her Lord in his kingdom. We ask further, whether he really is to have a kingdom. The Scriptures answer, Yes; at the end of this Gospel age he will come, not as a sin-offering, but as a great King, Prophet, Judge, to dispense the blessings secured by his death. We ask respecting the share of the church at the present time. The answer comes that those who faithfully follow the Lamb through good report and evil report, who take up their cross and follow Jesus, will be accounted worthy to be his associates in the kingdom.

### THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

We ask whether the church will be able to combat the evil tendencies in the world. The answer is, Yes; Satan will be bound for a thousand years, that he shall deceive the nations no more till the thousand years shall have been fulfilled. During those years the Savior's mission will be to bless mankind as the "Sun of Righteousness," with "healing" in his beams; and the church is to have a share with him in the blessing of the world. We ask whether this is some new proposition God has made; and the answer comes, No; this was God's plan and purpose before the foundation of the world. This is the Gospel, or good tidings, first declared to Abraham: "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."—Gen. 12:3, etc.

God intended to bless all the members of the human race, all nations and kindreds and tongues, and purposed that the blessing should come to them through the seed of Abraham. The Jewish nation were merely the typical seed; the antitypical seed is The Christ (Jesus the Head and the church his body), who will "bless all the families of the earth." But the world must wait for its blessing until the church shall have been completed, shall have passed the veil, and shall sit with Christ in his throne.

Asked as to the success of the blessing which will attend the work of the church, the Scriptures answer that "Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess;" and that the knowledge of God shall fill the whole earth. As to whether this means a universal salvation—that everybody will be saved—the answer is that God has provided that as all died in Adam, so all are to be revived, brought back to the

privilege of attaining everlasting life, through the merit of Christ's sacrifice; but that the attainment of everlasting life will depend upon the manner in which the privilege is used. None will be coerced or compelled.

The majority of mankind have such respect for righteousness that if its rewards were as sure and as desirable as are those of sin, unquestionably they would prefer to do right. Many tell us that they have been almost forced to do evil. Only the very few are willing to renounce sin and to walk in the narrow way of obedience and self-sacrifice. While those who do so in this age are to have a very special reward, others who love righteousness and hate iniquity will, under the rule of Christ's kingdom, have every assistance without compulsion. They will have co-operation in their endeavors for righteousness. The Scriptures, however, with equal force declare that as death was the original penalty of sin in Adam's case, so it will always be the penalty for sin; and that whoever during the future age sins wilfully shall die the second death, from which there will be no resurrection, no redemption, no hope of recovery.

### THE EARTH IS TO BE MAN'S FUTURE HOME

Before sin had entered into the world, the divine provision for our first parents was the Garden of Eden. As we think of this, let our minds turn to the future, guided by the Word of God; and in mental vision we see Paradise restored—not a garden merely, but the entire earth made beautiful, fruitful, sinless, happy. Then we recall the inspired promise so familiar to us—"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain," for the former things of sin and death will have passed away, and all things will have been made new!—Rev. 21:4, 5.

Recalling St. Peter's words of assurance respecting these glorious "times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began," we see that in God's "due time" the earth is to be brought to the perfection primarily designed for it, and typed in Eden. We believe that time to be near at hand. We see the promised blessings coming. What are our vast irrigation schemes by artesian wells and by aqueducts but fulfillments of the prophecies pertaining to the reign of Christ and the blessing of the earth! "In the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose."—Isa. 35:6, 1.

The Scriptures tell us that after God had created various orders of spirit beings he made man, "a little lower than the angels." (Psa. 8:5) The human race began with Adam and Eve, who had ability to grasp and appreciate the divine arrangement, as the brute creation have not. God made man in his own likeness. The fact that sin came in and brought Father Adam under the sentence of death does not signify that the Heavenly Father had changed His arrangement. The purpose which he had "in the beginning" has never changed.

We can see a reason why the entire world was not made an Eden; namely, God intended to give the race a trial. According to the record of the Scriptures, if the first pair

had maintained their righteousness, their holiness, they would have continued to be perfect and would have propagated a perfect race; and if sin had not come in, God would have been responsible for their maintenance. But God, foreseeing that sin would come in, merely made Eden perfect, and allowed the remainder of the earth to continue in an unfinished condition. Consequently God said to Adam, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."—Gen. 3:17-19.

#### EARTH'S IMPERFECTION IS FALLEN MAN'S BLESSING

God could have made the entire earth perfect as easily as he "planted" the little garden of Eden. But he foresaw that if the earth were perfected the death-struggle would be longer, and the degradation of man greater. The poverty of the world has assisted in keeping mankind back from greater depths of iniquity. The sentence, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," was evidently intended as a blessing, that man might learn lessons of experience by battling with the earth for his living. As the Creator said to the man regarding the curse of the earth, it was "for thy [man's] sake." So man has learned that "The wages of sin is death." The Heavenly Father has not, however, changed his plan. When the kingdom is set up, the earth shall yield her increase; and God assures us, "I will make the place of my feet glorious."—Isa. 60:13.

Edison has been the instrument of providence in giving us wonderful electrical devices. Burbank and others have, under divine guidance, worked miracles in horticulture. What beautiful fruits and flowers have followed as results! It is difficult to imagine anything nearer perfection either in Eden of old or the world-wide Eden to be established! In referring to the "times of restitution" the Prophet declares that "the earth shall yield her increase." (Psa. 67:6) We behold preparations for the fulfilment of this promise.

A few years ago a Virginia farmer found an abnormal stool of wheat—one hundred and forty-two stalks, each being a well-developed head—the offspring of a single grain of wheat! Under the name of "Miracle Wheat" it is now being developed slowly in various parts of the country. The average yield appears to be about twelve hundred grains from one kernel. This very year the same peculiarity in oats has been found, a stool growing wild by the roadside. The same divine providence is, additionally, guiding our chemists in economical methods of extracting nitrogen from the atmosphere for feeding the soil, and thus to increase the earth's blessings, in fulfillment of God's promise that he will make his footstool glorious.

Why has not the earth been already made glorious? The answer is that God is allowing the race to propagate first. Had mankind been perfect, they might have learned the lesson of the sinfulness of sin in the same way that the angels

have learned. But hastening to commit sin, they have learned evil first and have been subject to all the vicissitudes of sin and death. The angels have learned the other lesson—what righteousness is, what good is—not merely in the abstract, but in an appreciative sense.

#### MANKIND WILL LEARN A SECOND LESSON

God is now selecting the church. As soon as the church shall have been completed, then mankind will have opportunity to learn the lesson of righteousness, the knowledge of God, and will be raised up out of sin and death, out of the weaknesses that have come to them through sin. This uplifting time is definitely marked out in the Scriptures as "times of restitution"—the restoration of that which was lost. Since that which was lost was human perfection and Edenic bliss, mankind will not get heavenly things, but earthly blessings. God's will shall be accomplished. The world will be brought to perfection during the thousand years of Messiah's reign. The most important piece of restitution work relates to man. The hard, stony selfishness of heart, which is world-wide, is neither God-likeness nor to God's glory.

"Man's inhumanity to man  
Makes countless thousands mourn."

Nineteen centuries of preaching show that the cure for this malady is not in our power; and that only the few even desire to seek for the Lord's spirit of gentleness and tenderheartedness. But the great King of Glory is also the Good Physician. He alone can cure the disease of sin and its results. Through him God's promise to Israel will be fulfilled: "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." (Ezek. 36:26) This work will proceed from Israel to all the families of the earth, uplifting all the willing and obedient out of sin and death to all that was lost in Eden and redeemed at Calvary. Thank God, the unwilling and disobedient will not be consigned to endless torture, but to the "second death"—"everlasting destruction." The perfected earth will abide forever for the glorious being, man.

#### THE HEADSHIP OF CHRIST

God has purposed to make a new creation. Incidentally he takes the opportunity to call the church to be associated with her Lord in the divine nature, far above principalities and powers and every name that is named. Thus eventually, when all wilful sinners shall have been blotted out, we find, as the Scriptures state, that "every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and such as are in the sea" will be heard saying, "Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever." (Rev. 5:13) Thus the Lord will gather together all the faithful, both in heaven and in earth, under the headship of Christ, whose Head is Jehovah.—Eph. 1:10.

## A LEGION OF DEMONS

MARK 4:35; 5:20.—AUGUST 11.

TEXT:—"God is our Refuge and Strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore will we not fear, though the earth be changed, and though the mountains be cast into the midst of the sea."—Psalm 46:1, 2.

The forepart of today's study is an account of a very severe wind storm on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus, tired from his teaching and healing, in which vitality went out of him for the relief of the people, had gotten into one of the boats formerly used by some of his disciples in the fishing business and still owned by them. The purpose was to cross the lake for a season of rest and refreshment. The Master in the hinder part of the boat on a cushion was soon fast asleep. Suddenly a terrific storm set in which appalled even those accustomed to such scenes. The winds were blowing and the waves were tossing over the gunwales. It was an emergency; they could not bale out the water fast enough, and they wondered that the Master slept through it all. They came to him and aroused him saying, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" and he awakened and rebuked the wind saying, "Peace, be still." And immediately "there was a great calm."

The experience was a valuable lesson to the apostles, showing them the wonderful power of God exerted through their Master. And the same lesson comes down to us today. There are storms of life which sometimes sweep over ourselves and the brethren and over the whole household and imperil us, and which seem sure to sink us in despair. Then is the time for us to exercise faith in him who said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Then is the time to remember the Master's words, "My grace is sufficient for you; my strength

is made perfect in your weakness." Whoever can by the exercise of his faith take hold upon the Lord will find a great peace, a great calm come into his heart and into all his affairs. Then he can remember the Master's promise that "all things shall work together for good to those who love God, and who have been called according to his purpose."—Rom. 8:28.

The text at the head of this study draws to our attention another storm. It pictures the great storm of trouble which in the close of this age will suddenly burst upon the whole world of mankind and in which "Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots," "like a great millstone will be cast into the midst of the sea." This same "time of trouble," in some Scriptures, is spoken of as a "whirlwind," the result of letting loose "the four winds of heaven," that will be held until that time.—Rev. 17:5; 18:21; Jer. 25:32; Rev. 7:1.

Again, this trouble is symbolized by a "fire" which will burn not only the earth (symbolical of organized society), but also the heavens (symbolical of ecclesiasticism). This symbolical fire, this great anarchistic blaze, will leave present institutions in "ashes." Upon the ruins, the ashes of the blasted hopes and ambitions of society, political, scientific, and religious, will arise the glorious kingdom of Messiah to bless the world; and it will be as prophesied: "The desire of all nations shall come." It is really what all nations desire, although they do not realize how their desires are to be

accomplished by divine interposition through Messiah's kingdom.

Our text pictures that coming "time of trouble" as a great "storm," which will entirely remove, or change the earth, or the present construction of society, and carry the "mountains," the kingdoms of this present time, into the sea of anarchy. God's people will to some extent be associated with all of these troubles; but they are not to fear, they are to realize that God is at the helm. "When all around their souls give way, he then will be their hope and stay." Although sharing with others in the great disaster, the troubles will not invade their hearts. With them will dwell faith in God and in the glorious promises of his word, and they will be kept in peace thereby.

#### "JESUS GAVE THEM LEAVE"

In the heading we have connected this study with the demons, because the Scriptures intimate that the demons will have considerable to do with stirring up the great "time of trouble" and discontent with which this age will close and Messiah's kingdom be established.

On the other side of the Lake, as they landed, a man came running toward them, having seen them afar off. He was obsessed—that is to say, demons, the fallen angels mentioned by St. Jude (Jude 6) and St. Peter (2 Pet. 2:4) had gained access, and were in control of him. It was these that recognized Jesus and that spoke through the man's lips, saying, "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God? I adjure thee by God that thou torment me not." This was the answer to the command of Jesus that the fallen spirits should come out of the man. It transpired that not merely one demon had gained access, but many of them, a legion.

The demons realized that they were subject to the commands of Jesus and requested that they be allowed to enter into the swine—to obsess them. The Bible's explanation of how some angels fell from their original perfection and harmony with God, and of why they seek to gain control of humanity and commune with them through mediums, and why they personate the dead, we have not the space to present in this study; but as there are many today more or less

under the influence of demonism—spiritism—we will send further information upon postcard request.

Jesus gave the demons the privilege they requested, of passing from the man into the swine, of which there were about 2,000. The swine, like the man, were crazed by the strange outside influence which took possession of their brains. They ran violently down a steep place into the sea and were drowned. Meantime, the man, released from his obsession, was again in his right mind, and praised God for his deliverance. He desired to go with Jesus to become one of his disciples. He wanted to preach to others of the great deliverance which he had experienced and to tell them of this further proof that Jesus was the Messiah. But this was not in harmony with the Lord's judgment of the Father's will, and he refused his company, instructing him to go unto his own house and to tell his friends what great things the Lord had done for him.

He did so, and the people from all the region around who had known him as a crazy and obsessed man, marveled at his recovery and took note of the fact that Jesus had healed him. Those familiar with such matters claim that probably one-half of all the inmates of our insane asylums are persons obsessed by evil spirits, demons, without any organic disease of the brain. And alas! we see evidences on every hand that these evil spirits are paving the way for a great onslaught upon humanity.

Under the title of Psychic Phenomena spiritism is being examined by some of the prominent college professors of our day. They, like other spirits, are deceived in supposing that the manifestations which come to them are from their dead human friends. The Bible alone makes the matter perfectly clear. It assures us that the dead have no power to thus communicate, and that all such communications come from the demons, who do not dare to tell who they are, for if they did, humanity would be on guard against them; and they, desiring to come closely in contact with humanity, personate and represent variously the dead.

Hypnotism, mesmerism, clairaudient power and clairvoyant power are all part and parcel of the same great deception.

## JEWESS RESTORED TO LIFE

MARK 5:21-24, 35-43.—AUGUST 18.

TEXT:—"And he took the damsel by the hand and said unto her, *Talitha cumi, which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise.*"—Vs. 41.

When Jesus and the Apostles returned to the vicinity of Capernaum, the people were on the lookout for them, especially Jairus, one of the rulers of the synagogue. He came and fell at Jesus' feet in great distress. He besought him to come and heal his little daughter who lay at the point of death. As they went to the house of Jairus the multitude followed and thronged and delayed the procession. Meantime a messenger arrived from Jairus' house, telling that the child was dead. But Jesus said to the bereaved father, "Be not afraid, only believe."

The multitude was left, and only three of the apostles, Peter, James and John, went on with Jesus and Jairus. When they arrived they beheld a great tumult connected with the customary weeping and wailing. Jesus astonished the mourners by telling them not to weep, that the child was not dead, but asleep. What did he mean? Did the Great Teacher prevaricate? He spoke in the same manner in respect to his friend Lazarus, saying, "Lazarus sleepeth," and then later he explained that he was dead. How shall we understand these words? What were the facts? What was the truth in the case?

#### "ALL LIVE UNTO HIM"

The key to the matter is given us in our Lord's own words to the Sadducees, a class who denied that there would be any resurrection of the dead or any future life. The Sadducees asked Jesus a question about a woman who had had seven husbands, and who died after them all. They thought to make the teachings of Jesus respecting the resurrection of the dead look ridiculous by this question, but our Lord answered, "You do err, not understanding the Scriptures, nor the power of God."

Jesus proceeded to give them a proof that the dead are not really dead in the sense that the brute beasts are dead, because God in his plan had made an arrangement for the resurrection of humanity from the death state, whereas he has made no arrangement for the resurrection of the brute beasts. The provision for man's resurrection was that God would provide a Redeemer to satisfy the claims of divine justice against Adam and all his race, and who thus would

become the Great Deliverer, and, establishing his Messianic kingdom, would release all mankind from the power of death.

From this standpoint, God's standpoint, no human being is dead in the sense of being extinct like the brute beast. Their awakening will be accomplished by Messiah's kingdom, and all will then have fullest opportunity of coming to a knowledge of God's character and his will respecting them; and all will be assisted back to harmony with God, if they so desire, that they may thus reach again the perfection of life lost by disobedience. It is in view of this divine intention, the awakening of the dead, that Jesus spoke of death as a "sleep," a period of rest, of quiet, of unconsciousness.

Jesus' declaration to the Sadducees evidenced all this when he stated that God said to Moses at the burning bush, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." Jesus pointed out that God does not thus speak of himself as being the God of a being absolutely extinct, destroyed, as brute beasts. The expression therefore signifies, in harmony with all the Scriptures, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, and that mankind in general are merely sleeping, waiting for Messiah's kingdom and the morning of awakening, the morning of a better day, in which righteousness will prevail and in which Messiah will be the Great King.

This same thought respecting the sleep of the dead prevails throughout the Bible. We read, for instance, that "Abraham slept with his fathers"; "When Stephen, stoned to death, fell asleep" (Acts 7:60); St. Paul declared that the church "sleep," but that some of its members, alive in the end of the age, at the second coming of Christ, would not need to "sleep," but instead would "be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." (1 Cor. 15:52) Again he mentions all that "sleep in Jesus." Figuratively, both good and bad, are thus asleep in Jesus, because all of God's provision for their awakening is in and through Jesus' work of redemption and restitution.—Acts 3:19-21.

We are not to surmise that these sleep in heaven, because both good and bad sleep. For instance, in the statement, "Abraham slept with his fathers," we see two classes—Abraham, the friend of God, and his fathers, heathen men. Be-



sides, heaven is not a sleeping place, but a place of joyful activity and life. Neither could we imagine mankind as sleeping in a Catholic purgatory, nor in a Protestant hell of eternal torture.

Looking into the Bible for an answer as to where they sleep we hear the inspired words, "They that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake." (Dan. 12:2) Ah, that is it!—"Dust to dust," as God said in the beginning to Father Adam, upon whom the sentence fell and through whom we inherit our share: "Cursed is the earth for thy sake," "thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee . . . until thou return unto the ground from whence thou wast taken." (Gen. 3:17-19) Thus God has provided for Adam and his family a redemption from the power of death and a deliverance from the tomb, by the power of the resurrection; and it is Jesus who declared, "I am the resurrection and the life." The church will be the first from humanity to receive eternal life, and they will be granted a share with Jesus in his resurrection to glory, honor and immortality, as his bride, his joint-heir under his headship. Then, as said the Apostle, will come the world of mankind, "every man in his own order."

#### THEY LAUGHED AT HIM

Jesus put the statement about the maid's being asleep in a forceful way, in order to impress the great lesson that death does not end all, even though it appears so to do. The awakening which he was about to perform was to be a lesson and illustration of divine power, which will be exercised toward the entire race under the Messianic kingdom. Thus, as he declared, "All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and come forth." This statement applies not merely to the saintly church, who will come forth first, sharers in the first resurrection, and whose trial and

testing are already past, and whom divine approval has already sealed. The promise of coming forth applies also to the remainder of mankind; all except the spirit-begotten will come forth in a secondary or general resurrection, which will include nearly all mankind, not only the civilized, but also the heathen.

The world will come forth, Jesus said, that they may have a resurrection or raising up, up, up to perfection, to all that was lost in Eden, to all that was redeemed at Calvary. The awakening will be but a preparatory step. It will be accomplished instantaneously, but the further raising up, to mental, moral and physical perfection, will be a gradual work for which a thousand years has been apportioned, and in which the individual will be obliged to co-operate for his advancement and instruction in righteousness. This resurrection of mankind in general Jesus styled, "The resurrection by judgment," by disciplines, by trials and testings. Only those who wilfully reject the Lord and his way will die the second death, from which there will be no resurrection. Christ died once for all, and, according to the Scriptures, he will not die again.

Let us not forget that our Lord's miracles were merely illustrations of the great work which he will do on a world-wide, gigantic scale by and by—through the power and influence of his kingdom. He and the church, as spirit beings, will, of course, be invisible to men, but through earthly Agents the great burden of sickness and sorrow and pain and death will gradually be rolled away, so that by the end of Messiah's reign of a thousand years all the willing and obedient will have attained full human perfection; and the earth, meantime, will have been made to "blossom as the rose," and, as the Lord's footstool, thenceforth it shall be glorious.

## SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS

#### GREAT COMPANY NOT SHOWN IN THE PYRAMID

**Question.**—Is there nothing in the Great Pyramid to represent the great company—the bride's virgin companions, who will follow her? (Psa. 45:14) We understand your interpretation to teach that the Queen's Chamber symbolically represents those who will attain perfection on the human plane, and that the King's Chamber symbolically represents those who will attain to the divine nature. Is the great company not shown in the Pyramid, or have you merely neglected to call attention to the feature which symbolizes it?

**Answer.**—God, during this Gospel age of nearly nineteen centuries, has been calling the church to glory, honor and immortality. During the next age, under Messiah's kingdom, he will open up a way of restitution and return to earthly perfection for all the willing and obedient of mankind. God did not call any to be of the great company class. Those who will ultimately be of that class, "saved as by fire," will get a reward to which they were never called, or invited. There is but one call during this age; as we read, "Ye are called in one hope of your calling." (Eph. 4:4) That call was to self-sacrifice—to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. Only by making that covenant of sacrifice were any of us accepted or begotten of the holy Spirit or privileged to call ourselves the elect of God.

In view of these things it would seem quite appropriate that the Great Pyramid does not show a place for the great company, as though they had been invited to such a place.

The ante-chamber, as we have already pointed out, marks the experiences of the church in the school of Christ, which are necessary before any could pass, by the power of the first resurrection, into the divine perfection symbolized by the King's chamber. We may, therefore, assume that the great company class all come into this ante-chamber, or school, but that only the "faithful unto death" pass beyond it under the granite leaf into the King's Chamber.

#### SIGNIFICANCE OF PLANES L AND K ON CHART

**Question.**—In describing the Chart you say, Vol. 1, page 211, "These, when born from the dead in the resurrection, will have the divine nature and form." Please harmonize this statement with another found on page 235, which reads thus: "We know not how long it will be after their change, or perfecting, as spirit beings (plane L), before they as a full and complete company will be glorified (plane K) with the Lord, united with him in power and great glory."

**Answer.**—The two quotations are in perfect accord. The questioner's difficulty is in respect to what is signified by plane "L" and plane "K" on the Chart. Plane "L" represents the personal glory of our Lord and the church by the power of the first resurrection, from human nature to divine

nature. We understand that all the members of the elect church will experience such a change, from mortal to immortal conditions, from human to divine nature, from weakness to power, from dishonor to glory, from animal to spirit conditions (1 Cor. 15:44), before being ushered into the glory of power and dominion represented by plane "K." In other words, the first quotation refers to the personal exaltation of all the spirit-begotten, overcoming class in the first resurrection, to plane "L," and the second to their exaltation to plane "K," which will come when the Heavenly Bridegroom shall present his bride complete, without fault or blame, before the Heavenly Father, as pictured in the 45th Psalm.

#### THE RESURRECTION POWER NOW AT WORK

**Question.**—Does the resurrection power now work in the—lives of the saints?

**Answer.**—The resurrection power is now working in the lives of the saints. In Romans 8:11 the Apostle says, "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit indwelling." This does not refer to future resurrections. It refers to the energizing of your mortal body. The Apostle argues that we were alive unto sin once, but that when we made our full surrender to the Lord we became dead to sin; that when we were begotten of the holy Spirit we became new creatures, in this earthen vessel; and that the body is reckoned dead to sin and the new creature alive to God. Now, the Apostle says, the Spirit of God is able to so quicken our mortal body that instead of being a servant of sin, as it once was, it will be a servant of righteousness.

There is a great difference between the immortal body which we shall have by and by, and the quickening of the mortal body. The new body will not be a flesh body at all. "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spirit body." (1 Cor. 15:42-44) This animal body is to be quickened by the Spirit of God that dwells in us; and by degrees this resurrection process in which the new creature is engaged becomes stronger and stronger. If this continues, our resurrection progresses; and the time will come, at the end of our course, when the Lord will count us worthy of the glorious change, to be like him and share his glory on the high, spirit plane.

#### THE DIVINE PLAN NOT FINISHED

**Question.**—When on Calvary our Lord said, "It is finished!" to what did he refer as being completed?

**Answer.**—This did not mean that our Lord had finished