

ages" is that the person who eats meat clean in itself but thinking the matter to be wrong, thus defiling his own conscience by eating, would be damned—sent to an eternity of torture. But no such thought was in the Apostle's mind nor could it be properly understood in his words. He there emphasized the fact that any person eating meat, however clean, but thinking it to be a sin, a crime, to eat it, would as a consequence be under condemnation for having violated his conscience, his judgment of the Lord's will, and this would serve as a cloud to separate between himself and the Lord, who judges the heart and not merely the outward conduct. Such an alienation might ultimately lead to the loss of the great prize of our high calling, and thus into the great company, or possibly eventually into the second death. The Apostle explains why this condemnation would hold, saying, "because he eateth not of faith"—not in harmony with his conscience—and whatsoever is not in harmony with faith and conscience is a sin. The principle here applied to the question of using or not using spirituous liquors would certainly be profitable to all of God's people: the person who uses them believing them to be sinful is violating his conscience; the person who uses them knowing that another will be effected thereby unfavorably is violating the law of love, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." This matter becomes a very important one in our day, more than ever before, because today the question of conscience in the matter of using liquors is more pronounced than ever before.

The following article, clipped from the *Literary Digest*, is translated from the French, and will, we trust, be both interesting and instructive to many in connection with this lesson:

UNTO THE THIRD AND FOURTH GENERATION

"One cannot be, with impunity, the son of a drunkard"—so says Dr. A. Joffroy, a French physician, who writes on "Alcohol and Alcoholism" in the *Revue Scientifique* (Paris, July 13). Dr. Joffroy's article reads in places like an old-fashioned temperance tract, but it is in reality a pitiless scientific statement of facts. Diseases, the author points out, are of two kinds, those that attack persons in normal health and those that touch only those who are predisposed to them. To create such morbid predispositions alcohol is eminently suited, and in this way it strikes down not only those who abuse it, but their descendants, often ceasing its ravages only when it has obliterated a whole family. We can quote here only a small part of what Dr. Joffroy says. First comes his division of diseases into the two categories mentioned above. We read:

"In the case of some diseases (scarlet fever, small-pox, plague, etc.), the pathogenic agent produces the specific malady in every one exposed to contagion, whatever may have been his previous condition of health. But, on the other hand, there is a whole class of diseases that attack only such as are predisposed. Of 100 infants fed in the same way, one or two will become abnormally fat, because, for example, the father had gout or the mother diabetes. . . .

"But hereditary predisposition exists also with nervous diseases, and alcoholism is one of the most effective means of creating such predisposition, as well as developing it where it exists. To have cholera or rheumatism, for instance, one must have obese, nervous alcoholic parents. A man may be seized with shaking palsy, following some violent emotion, . . . but heredity must be present to facilitate the action, and alcoholism is generally found to be at the bottom of this heredity."

"In mental diseases," Dr. Joffroy goes on to say, "the role of heredity is greater still. We may almost say that predisposition is absolutely necessary for these." The author rejects the classification made by some authors who divide mental diseases into those of the normal and abnormal brain. The former, he thinks, do not exist, a diseased brain being always abnormal. Even poisons that act on the brain select those who are predisposed, and this is eminently true of alcohol itself. Predispositions (generally alcoholic) determine the special form of drunkenness and explain why wine makes one man gay, another sad, another quarrelsome. Likewise, hereditary predisposition explains why alcoholism results, with one man, in an ulcer of the stomach, with another in cirrhosis of the liver, with others in paralysis of one or another set of nerves. The writer continues:

"On epilepsy the action of alcohol is quite clearly manifest; sometimes a subject plainly epileptic from infancy takes to drink at about 20, with the result that his attacks increase in violence at each excess; sometimes a man of thirty to forty years who has had only slight seizures in childhood begins to have the characteristic attacks, which disappear or lessen when he becomes abstinent. . . .

"In order that I may be clearly understood I will repeat the definition that I have given elsewhere of incipient degeneracy. "The totality of organic defects, of hereditary or acquired origin, which, by lessening organic resistance, create new morbid aptitudes and make causes pathogenic when of themselves they would be powerless to injure a normal organism."

"And I repeat again that, in the creation of these new morbid aptitudes, this hereditary predisposition, which dominates almost all pathology, alcoholism stands pre-eminent, doing more harm and counting more victims than tuberculosis. Alcoholism, in fact, not only affects the individual, but its effects are continued to his descendants. One cannot be, with impunity, the son of an alcoholic. Alcoholism begins with the father and strikes down his children, and generally its action continues, until, in the fourth or fifth generation, it has destroyed the family. But before this final result is reached, the alcoholics and their descendants are, according to circumstances, hurled into disease, madness or crime, filling our hospitals, asylums and jails, as I have already said.

"Blind indeed are those who, ignorant of the dangers of alcohol, see in it only a source of revenue!"—*Translation made for the Literary Digest.*

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

CURIOSITY A DANGEROUS SNARE

Increasingly the evidences multiply which show the power of the fallen angels in the affairs of men. We call attention to the fact that curiosity is the "bait" which they generally use to entrap their victims. Apparently the human mind is so constituted that these "demons" cannot intrude upon it except with its consent: hence the resort to *curiosity* to gain the consent of the will to investigate. Then gradually the leading is onward into foolishness or perhaps to obsession. Mechanical toys which answer all kinds of questions are amongst these. They are of various designs, but all requiring personal manipulation, and all tending to establish reliance in and communication with the fallen angels who personate the dead and sometimes personate the Lord himself, and give religious counsel in the endeavor to bind to themselves the confidence of mankind.

The more absurd the proposition the more likely will it be to arouse curiosity. It seems absurd to believe that a "Ouija board" can and does answer questions correctly. There is reason to doubt that the operator may have something to do with the movements, and each must try for himself, thus slightly coming under the power of these "wicked spirits." (Eph. 6:12, margin.) The only safe plan is to have nothing whatever to do with "occult powers." They are all "powers of darkness"; for the holy angels do not thus com-

municate with man during this Gospel age, and as "the dead know not anything" (Eccl. 9:10) they cannot. Hence all such occult powers are of the lying spirits, with which men may have communion and fellowship only at their peril.

To our surprise, all that we have written on this subject does not keep some of our readers aloof from these snares. We have heard recently of some who were "not afraid to operate a Ouija board." The truth should and does give courage, but this is not the way to exercise it. Our Lord says, "Fear God,"—that is to say, "Fear to disobey and to offend God." The Apostle says, "Let us fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest we should seem to come short of it." The Editor of this journal fears not what men or demons can do to him, so long as he abides in the loving favor of God; but he would fear to disobey the Lord in respect to having communication with these demons and their various "curious" devices. It is well that we not only remember the promises of God; but let us also remember to be "obedient children." "All things shall work together for good to them that love God—the called ones according to his purpose," and the delusions of the end of this age will not be such as would deceive the very elect; but we should remember the other side also, namely, that such as would have the special watch-care and deliverance promised must "abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Of such, only, it is written,

"A thousand shall fall at thy side—ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee."

Indeed we fancy that those of us who have been blest with the greater light upon God's plan should be the more loyal to him and should be able to stand severer tests.

"WALK BY FAITH, NOT BY SIGHT"

The Scriptures clearly teach that in the past God spake unto the fathers miraculously, and so we believe. Yet we would not listen to such "voices" now. We should close our minds against all such revelations either to ourselves or others. It is now the fallen angels that thus seek to commune with us *clairaudiently*. We should, if such were heard, pray at once to God, "Deliver us from the evil one."

"God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son"—and his chosen apostles. We have their messages, and these, we are assured, are "able to make us wise unto salvation," and sufficient that the man of God should be thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work. The Apostle Peter also emphasizes this, saying, "We have a more sure word of prophecy unto which we do well to take heed as unto a light shining in a dark place until the day dawn and the day star arise in your hearts."

We know of one "brother" in the truth recently deceived by the adversary into foolishness by these "voices" which personated God. It is our duty to warn all against these "seducing spirits" (1 Tim. 4:1) and to repeat the caution of God's Word in respect to every teaching of men and demons, "If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them"—they are of the darkness while we are children of the light.

We have also warned our readers against those claiming gifts of the Spirit, including "unknown tongues." Nevertheless we have just heard of a dear "brother" who was very nearly captured, ensnared, thus by the adversary. He attended a meeting where "the faithful" evidently became obsessed in some degree. He went to the altar, submitted his will and had already begun to feel a power coming into his arms, which were becoming rigid, when another "brother" went to his rescue. Surely "holy-rolling" trances, fits and frenzies are contrary to the holy Spirit as exhibited by Jesus and his apostles, and denominated "the spirit of a sound mind."

There is much more excuse for the world and the nominal church than for the truth people along these lines. We cannot understand how anyone who has read carefully and prayerfully the six volumes of DAWN-STUDIES could be in doubt as to any of these delusions. The explanation of falling into such a trap would surely be that the person had to some extent neglected the study or the practice of the truth and had measurably lost its spirit. Let us remember that our Lord has provided the full armor for all the soldiers of the cross in this "evil day," but that it remains for us to put

it on and use it if we would resist the evil one in our Redeemer's name. All these should know the source of such pranks and communications—they should not be *curious*. And if they do recognize their source and still dally with them instead of being active and zealous in showing forth the light of truth, it implies that they are not appreciative of the great privileges they enjoy. Just such we must suppose the Lord will wish to sift out as not "more than conquerors."

AS THE SERPENT BEGUILLED EVE

We have mentioned Satan's use of human curiosity to entrap the mind. We refer now to mother Eve's seduction by him from loyalty to God. It was the sight of the serpent eating without harm the fruit forbidden to her and Adam that aroused her *curiosity*. The matter seemed to contradict the divine threat that the eating of that fruit would to Adam and his race mean, "Dying thou shalt die." Too late she found that she had been deceived and that not the effect of the fruit, but the reward of disobedience, was death. So with us, the danger is in leaving God to hearken to and connive with demons—the disloyalty—the neglect of our own grand opportunities in this "harvest" time.

By this we do not mean to be understood as condemning all curiosity and investigation of proper matters, of which there are many. We cannot even condemn the world for having curiosity respecting things occult, for they have not the Word of God to guide them as have we. But surely those who have tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the age to come, and been made partakers of the spirit of holiness,—these are well nigh inexcusable for *curiosity* along the lines occult. We should always keep in memory that "Secret things belong to God, but things revealed belong to us and to our children always." The revelation granted to us in the Word of God is so complete as to leave no room for legitimate curiosity respecting any of the works of darkness. Any attempt to investigate them tells of our lack of faith in the divine Word!

A SIGN OF OUR TIMES

COMPARE 2 TIM. 3:1-4

"The Roman Catholic Bishop of Elphin, in Ireland (Dr. Clancy), in a pastoral letter read a few weeks ago in his diocese, reveals a sad state of things in modern Irish life in that part of Ireland. The Bishop writes: 'The absence of reverence for God and of respect for the awful sacredness of an oath are unhappily prominent features of modern Irish life. Cursing, blaspheming, profane and ribald language of the most revolting character assail the ears of the passers-by in our towns and villages, and the utter disregard for truth, even under the sanction of an oath and the solemn surroundings of our law courts, has become so frequent and so flagrant that, as a consequence, our religion is dishonored and our faith brought into contempt.'"—*Exchange*.

THE LESSON OF SAMSON'S LIFE

Judges 16:21-31.—DECEMBER 1.

Golden Text—"Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might."—Eph. 6:10.

Many have wondered that three chapters of the Old Testament have been devoted to the story of Samson—great, strong, good-natured, witty. Still more strange it has seemed to some of us that his name should appear in the list of faith-heroes enumerated by the Apostle in the book of Hebrews, chapter 11. Here his name appears with those of Abraham, David, Gideon, "who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions." No other similar character is mentioned in the Scriptures; he stands unique amongst the Bible heroes. Dr. Lang remarks:—

"His irony, his grim laughter as well as his feats of strength are duly recorded. The story is strange, pathetic—one over which we smile and sigh, one of boisterous mirth and fearful sorrow—such wit, such folly, such force, such feebleness, comedy so grotesque and tragedy so awful."

Those who have not learned to rightly divide the Word of Truth—those who have not learned to study Scripture dispensationally—will surely be perplexed when they think of Samson as one of the saints of God, and then attempt to measure such saintship with the teachings of Jesus and the apostles. Meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love, Samson no doubt possessed in some measure, as might any natural man; but most evidently he was not begotten of the holy Spirit—not, therefore, one of the sons of God in the sense that Jesus and his followers are recognized in the Scriptures. The same is true in considerable

measure of all the ancient worthies. No such standards were set before them as are set before us of this Gospel age. They were not called to the high calling of a change of nature from human to divine. They were not begotten again to be new creatures in Christ Jesus. The time for this was not yet. Christ, the forerunner on this heavenly narrow way, had not yet come. The sacrifice of atonement had not yet been offered, and none therefore could come unto the Father as sons or receive the begetting of his Spirit. The very highest rank possible to the most noble of that time was that they might be called servants of God. Moses was faithful as a servant over his house, and Samson and the others belonged to the house of servants. So, then, we must not think to copy Samson nor to set his life as a standard for our children or others. We are to assign him the place in the divine plan which the Scriptures give him, and then his life and his doings will be seen in their proper light and not prove a stumbling-block to us.

THE MISSION OF SAMSON

Samson's parents were consecrated people of God in the fullest sense that it was possible for them to be at the time. They believed in God, trusted him, and desired that in some way their son might be used of him in his service. They and their son, had they lived during this Gospel age, under its light and privileges, no doubt would have been saints of a high order in the church. Samson's special consecration to the Lord was followed by a Nazarite vow, such as is

described in Numbers 6:2-6: it included total abstinence from grapes, wine and all intoxicants, permission for the hair to go uncut, and the avoidance of contamination with dead bodies. Many took such a vow temporarily, but Samson and John the Baptist apparently voluntarily took the vow for life. And here it is well to remember that through all the vicissitudes of his peculiar career there is no intimation that Samson ever violated this vow. In its observance we have a testimony to his faith and his loyalty to God—in harmony with God. In this respect at least he was an overcomer of a high order; and all the faithful, all the overcomers of this Gospel age, who have taken the vows of the cross and the narrow way in the footsteps of Jesus, should be able to appreciate very highly the loyalty of Samson to his vow. If we are similarly faithful to the observance of our vows we may be sure of a place in the heavenly kingdom.

SAMSON JUDGED ISRAEL TWENTY YEARS

We have seen the child Samson consecrated to the Lord's service; we have seen his acceptance of this consecration in his taking of the Nazarite vow. Some have confused this vow with the statement that our Lord was called a Nazarene. This is a mistake. The people of the city of Nazareth were called Nazarenes, but those who took the special vow were called the Nazarites. Our Lord was not a Nazarene. He took no vow respecting his hair or the use of grapes and the fruit of the vine. He was a Nazarene, because for years his home had been in that city.

The Scriptures indicate also that God accepted Samson for his service. Now the question arises, In what way could God use him? What service could he render? Would God send him to preach the Gospel? No, there was no Gospel, no good tidings, no message to declare yet. That message could not go forth until first of all the Redeemer had come and the satisfaction for our sins had been made. Thus the Scriptures declare that Christ brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel—life eternal, life for the world of mankind, for all who eventually would receive the goodness of God through Christ, and be restored by him to the full of human perfection. For these the eternal life is the divine intention. More than this, our Lord brought immortality to light as the special gift of God to that special class, which—called during this Gospel age, in the dark time when the way is narrow and difficult—has been obedient to the heavenly calling, and, laying aside every weight, runs with patience the race set before it. For these the divine provision is glory, honor and immortality. But these things were not available either to Jews or Gentiles in Samson's day, and hence there were no missions or ministries of grace and truth as we have these now. However, God had a work to be done at that time, as we shall see, and he used Samson as his agent in connection with that work.

After settling in Palestine the Israelites did not remain earnest and loyal to God and inspired with the promise made to Abraham, that through their nation God intended to bless all nations under the leadership of Messiah. When more or less of lack of faith with idolatry came in, God allowed them to be oppressed by the heathen nations on either side of them. At the time in question the Philistines had, by divine permission, conquered them and reduced them to a kind of slavery, by not permitting them to have any except the very crudest of tools and by not allowing amongst them blacksmiths, whose trade at that time was largely the forging of swords and spears and other implements of warfare. Thus the Israelites were unarmed, while the Philistines, their oppressors, were well armed. And while the Israelites were learning a lesson from their captivity they were also losing their courage. The Lord, knowing their condition, was preparing for their deliverance, and he accepted the consecration of Samson and made of him his agent for the raising of a patriotic spirit amongst the people, for their invigoration by hope, and for the paralyzing to some extent of the power of the Philistines, so that the Israelites might gradually begin to recover themselves from their bondage and to look again to the Lord for the deliverance which he was willing to grant them on their return to his favor. Samson's great strength, considered by the people in its relationship to his Nazarite vow, would be a continual lesson to them of the power of God. They could see that the Lord was quite able to accept of all who were consecrated to him, and to make them mighty indeed to the overthrow of their enemies. Had the lesson been rightly applied we may readily suppose that all the children of the Israelites would have been similarly consecrated, and that the people would have been looking forward to the Lord's mighty deliverance of them; but they were slow to learn.

Samson judged Israel after the proper meaning of that

word "judging" in the original, but not according to the usual acceptance of the word today. He judged Israel in the sense of avenging wrongs that they sustained upon the enemies who committed those wrongs. Samson was not merely a warrior because of his love of fighting; he was a patriot, he was a firm believer in the Oath-Bound Covenant, he was hoping for the deliverance of Israel from all antagonists, and for the nation's exaltation as God's people, to be his mighty power in the world for the blessing of all nations. He was therefore opposed to everything that opposed the Israelites; and the Philistines being their oppressors and opponents he directed his energies against them. Their wealth was gained largely from the extensive wheat-fields lying between the mountains of Judea and the Mediterranean Sea, and in order to injure them financially Samson on one occasion took peculiar means for setting fire to these wheat-fields owned and operated by the Philistines for their own profit. It was not a joke, although the means used were peculiar, unusual. Samson was a general in the field of battle, and in his own person and in his own ingenuity he represented infantry, cavalry and artillery, using every means at his command to break the forces of the oppressors and to deliver his people, judging their oppressors or penalizing them, injuring them, punishing them, and to that extent helping to deliver Israel.

The abject servility of the Israelites is manifested by the fact that, instead of coöperating with Samson and with him claiming the divine promises for the possession of the land of Palestine and the overthrow of all opponents, they so feared the Philistines and had so little faith in God that they were even willing to deliver Samson to the Philistines, and did deliver him bound. He allowed the binding and delivery, knowing his ability to break the bonds and to put to flight those who thought they had him in their power, and he did so. What a lesson again to the faint-hearted, that they should have courage to accept the Lord's promises and be obedient to his directions. They had already been in the land for a long time, but had failed to conquer it because of lack of faith, whereas with the proper faith one might have chased a thousand and two might have put ten thousand to flight.

SAMSON A BLIND PRISONER

When we remember Samson's zeal for God and for his people, when we remember his faithfulness to his vow as a Nazarite, when we remember his great strength—which enabled him with no other weapon than the jawbone of an ass to fight a large company of his enemies and to slay about a thousand of them—his undoing by a woman carries with it a great lesson. The Philistines directly and indirectly planned the seduction of their powerful enemy, using as a decoy the beautiful Delilah, and the man who was so strong in other respects was found vulnerable from this point of attack.

What a lesson to Spiritual Israelites! How we also should realize that the great adversary will be on the alert to use any snare or trap for the undoing of those who are faithful soldiers of the cross. If we were to draw an analogy as between Samson's temptation and the temptation of the body of Christ it would imply that we should be specially on guard against the blandishments of the world and the adversary through the nominal church, which figuratively is called a woman—more, she is described in the Scriptures as a harlot.

It was when Samson rested his head upon the lap of Delilah that he was shorn of his hair and of his strength—a condition of his vow being broken. Similarly those who are strong in the Lord and in the power of his might through their faithfulness to the vows of consecration as followers of the Lord Jesus are in danger of going to sleep in the lap of the modern Delilah, Churchianity. A spirit of drowsiness is their spirit, of rest from the activities and self-sacrifices of their vow, a spirit of slumber; and with that spirit goes their strength. Is there not in some respects an analogy between the experiences of Samson and the experiences of the church of Christ? Consider the activities of the early church and the victories they gained in the name and strength of the Lord. Consider how the adversary entangled and seduced the church, and how for a considerable time the stupor and drowsiness and ease and worldliness were upon those who vowed to be faithful to the Lord and his service. Consider how the strength of the Gospel message was lost while in that drowsy condition in the "dark ages." Consider how the eyes of our understanding were put out even as Samson lost his natural sight. Consider that even since the Reformation time the church has been to a large extent under the blinding influence of the adversary, a slave to churchianity and the world, even as Samson was the slave of the Philistines. As their slave Samson was used instead of a horse to turn a great wheel for grinding their food; and thus indeed the

church has been grinding food of a certain kind for many while still a slave to the world and under its blinding influences.

THE DEATH OF SAMSON

Here our lesson really begins. The Philistine worshipers of Dagon had called for a great religious festival in honor of their god, whom they credited with the success of their warfare not only upon the Israelites but their sea victories against the Sidonians and Egyptians. Samson was a prisoner in their prominent city, Gaza, where the festival was to begin in a great temple. In the midst of their hilarities Samson was brought forth as an exhibit of the power of their idol, of their god Dagon, over all enemies. They would have this one who had slain thousands to sing and play on an instrument and dance before them, and after he had thus made sport for them he stood between the two main pillars upon which the center of the structure rested and where he was in full view of the thousands who were in the temple proper itself, and also from the roof of it could be seen by about three thousand congregated thereon, the prominent men and women of the nation, the lords of the Philistines. Samson, still full of the spirit of his consecration, still full of the desire to serve God and his nation, entreated that the sacrifice of his life in the Lord's cause might be acceptable and might be used at this time in the slaughter of all the principal people of the Philistines, and thus signify a greater opportunity for the Israelites to be released from their slavery than any other means that could be thought of or made available at the time. The Lord was pleased to accept the sacrifice, and Samson exerting his great natural strength combined with whatever the Lord was pleased to additionally grant, the two great central pillars of the structure gave way, the whole edifice came down with a crash, the three thousand people on the roof as well as the materials of the building serving as the executioner of the hour; or, as in the other figure, as Samson's artillery against his enemies, who were also the enemies of the Lord and the opponents of the divine program for which Israel stood.

Modern buildings in many respects differ from those of ancient times, so that to us it may be difficult to imagine the truthfulness of this description. However, we have items of history which somewhat correspond. Pliny describes two theaters built of wood by L. Curio, which he says were large enough to contain all the people of Rome, and were supported by a single hinge; and if this were to give way, there would have been a greater slaughter than at the battle of Cannae.

We have seen some analogy as between Samson's experiences and the history of the Gospel church: may we not carry this analogy farther, and see in the death of Samson and its influence an illustration of the closing of this Gospel age, the consummation of the sacrifice of the church and the resulting influence upon the world? It is of course hazardous to attempt the reading of prophecies or symbols not yet fulfilled. Nevertheless we suggest that the Scriptural delineations of the future correspond in many respects with the picture given us in the life of Samson. Have we not come to the time when the Lord's people are recovering a little of the strength of the early church? and have we not also come to the time when the worldly wise are feasting and rejoicing and giving honor to the god of Evolution, and through their Higher Critics denouncing the true Israelites and their hopes and the divine testimonies? Have we not come very near

to the time when those who are still faithful to the Lord and the principles of his Word are made sport of by the worldly-wise? and have we not come to the time when some at least of the Lord's true people are ready to put forth all the strength in their power through the volunteer work and the colporteur work, the pilgrim work, and a thousand other energies to move the pillars of error which uphold churchianity? It is appointed for the church to die, to die in sacrifice, to die in the interests and service of the truth—to lay down their lives for the brethren, the Israelites indeed, for their deliverance from the bondage of the world. The strength of our reformation lies in the Abrahamic promise, in our confidence in God, and in our vow to do his will. With the death of the last member of the church, the body of Christ, will surely come, as the Scriptures point out, the downfall of churchianity and the present system of world power, and all this will but make ready for the glorious kingdom of God's dear Son, though the incidentals shall signify a time of trouble upon the great ones, the mighty ones, the chief captains of earth.

OUR GOLDEN TEXT

"Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might." Here we have an exhortation applicable to the people of God at all times and under all conditions and under all circumstances. It would have applied to Samson in his day as a natural man, a servant, and it applies to us of today who are new creatures in Christ Jesus, servant-sons of the Most High. If we look back to Samson and all the ancient worthies recounted by the Apostle, we note that the secret of their strength of character, by which they endured and overcame, resided in their faith in God and in the promises. And so it must be with us. But there is a difference between faith and credulity: the latter may give a spirit of energy, but will not endure. The former is the power of God which enables us to endure all things as good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ, soldiers of the truth, soldiers of righteousness, fighting against sin and error and all ungodliness, including the artful wiles of the adversary, by which he would deceive us and the whole world, misrepresenting the divine character by the "doctrines of devils" foisted upon the Lord's people during the "dark ages," to the blinding of the eyes of their understanding. Now in the Lord's providence our eyes are becoming more and more opened, in harmony with the Apostle's prayer, "I pray God for you that you may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height; and to know the love of God which passeth knowledge."—Eph. 3:18, 19.

Hence it is important for us, not merely to believe, but to believe the truth. Our Redeemer prayed, "Sanctify them with thy truth, thy Word is truth," and the Scripture tells us of some who, not having sufficient love for the truth, are abandoned of the Lord to believe a lie, and through that false faith to find ultimately the condemnation of their heart attitude and to be counted unworthy a place with the "very elect." Let us set the Word of the Lord above all other messages: yea, more than this, let us prize the divine Word and plan above any of our own misconceptions and imaginings. Thus we shall be willing to buy the truth at any cost and to sell it not for any price. Thus we shall be found acceptable to our Lord, and shall be kept strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, until our trials shall be finished and he shall say, It is enough; come up higher; enter into the joys of thy Lord.

RUTH'S CHOICE

Ruth 1:14-22.—DECEMBER 8.

Golden Text—"Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."—Ruth 1:16.

Manifestly the chief object in the brief narrative of Ruth and Naomi was to preserve an authentic record of a link in the chain of our Lord's human ancestry. Though a Gentile by birth, Ruth was a sincere Jewish proselyte, incorporated into the commonwealth of Israel, and as such she was recognized of God as one of his chosen people. And not only so, but she was also honored with a place in the line of our Lord's human ancestry, being the great-grandmother of David. The same was true of Rahab, also a Jewish proselyte, who became the mother of Boaz, the great-grandfather of David.

The story of Ruth and Naomi is an interesting one as an item of Jewish history. It has its lights and also its shadows; for the characters were but samples of our fallen humanity coming gradually under the influence of divine grace. All that was noble in them therefore calls forth our admiration and esteem, while the blemishes are to be deplored.

Naomi and her husband Elimelech, pressed by hard times and a threatening famine, decided to leave the land of Israel and the people of God and try their fortunes among the Gentiles in the land of Moab. In doing so they were leaving the special privileges of association with God's people, and failing also to contribute their part toward their comfort and encouragement and godly counsel in the time of general distress. They were also exposing themselves and their children to the unhallowed influences of an idolatrous people. This was the part they chose merely for temporal advantage, rather than to share the hardships at home and trust in the Lord to supply their needs.

The result of this wrong course was only trouble. Elimelech died there, and Naomi was left alone with her two sons to rear. By and by the two sons married heathen wives who knew not the God of Israel. Then they also died; and Naomi,

bereft of all but her two daughters-in-law, feeling that the hand of the Lord was against her in that she was thus sorely chastened, decided to retrace her steps to the land of her nativity, and again to cast in her lot with the Lord's people.

When she had thus, by sad experience, learned the needed lesson and determined again to submit herself to the Lord's leading, the favor of God began to return to her. She found a great comfort and blessing in the manifested devotion of Ruth, her daughter-in-law, and in her conversion to the Jewish faith. "And Ruth said, 'Entreat me not to leave thee, or return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people and thy God my God. Where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.'"

That this was not a mere impulse on the part of Ruth is also manifest from her subsequent course of faithfulness to her mother-in-law; and Naomi's appreciation and devotion to her interests were just as manifest. Evidently though Naomi and her husband had erred in judgment and had been faint-hearted they were still loyal to God and let their light shine in the land of Moab, and both the daughters-in-law had been influenced by it, while Ruth was fully converted to God.

Their kindly reception by the people of Bethlehem and the sympathy and kindness shown them were other great blessings. And finally the marriage of Ruth to Boaz, a man of character, wealth and influence, furnished a happy home to the desolate women and Ruth was honored of God in the line of our Lord's ancestry.

The advice of Naomi to Ruth concerning Boaz was not of unalloyed wisdom. Such a course today would brand any woman as a loose, if not a disreputable, character. And that Boaz feared such reproach is also clear from his request of Chap. 3:14. In advising such a course Naomi again betrayed the weakness of her trust in God. But God in kindness had mercy on her weakness; and, their hearts being free from evil, God overruled all for good.

The words of Ruth, contained in the Golden Text of the lesson, serve to remind us of one of our duties. We who by nature were Gentiles (as Ruth was a Moabitess) have by God's grace become spiritual Israelites; and should determine that henceforth former conditions, interests, pleasures and relationships are gone forever. To us "old things have passed away and behold all things have become new."

How forcefully this lesson is brought to our attention by the Psalmist's words, which prophetically represent the

church, and urge her to "Forget also thy father's house and thine own people: so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord—worship thou him." (Psa. 45:10, 11) It is expected that those who have had the high honor of betrothal to the great King's Son, the one "altogether lovely," will become so enchanted with their future prospects as to be almost oblivious to the things of this present time, except as to "things needful."

"Only for Jesus! Lord, keep this forever

Sealed on my heart and engraved on my life!

Pulse of all gladness and nerve of endeavor,

Secret of rest and the strength of our strife."

Next to the Lord himself are his people, and whoever loveth not him that is begotten of God does not really love God. And to love God and his people means that we will delight to meet with them. Where opportunities for fellowship in praise, prayer and the study of the divine Word exist and go unimproved it marks a coldness or at least a lukewarmness of our love for God and holy things, which argues unfavorably as respects even our sharing the Bridegroom's throne.

To counteract the influences of sin and worldliness and to grow in grace let us resolve to fully cast in our lot with the Lord's faithful, saying, in Ruth's words, "Thy people shall be my people and thy God my God; where thou dwellest I will dwell and there will I be buried."

DWELLING WITH GOD'S PEOPLE

All of God's people can dwell together in love, in fellowship, under the divine care as a "royal priesthood" "seated together in heavenly places"—in the antitypical Tabernacle's "Holy." So far as our earthly abode is concerned we may today live comparatively closely, by virtue of the convenient railway and mail services. It behooves us all, therefore, to "speak often one to another" that, as the Prophet declares, the Lord may hear and note and prosper our blessing of one another. (Malachi 3:16) And we suggest that it is a partial fulfillment of the injunction that we "make straight paths for our feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way," if we seek such dwelling places as will conduce to our occasional interchanges with the household of faith. Let us put God first and Christian fellowship and growth in grace second and both before wealth in all of our reckonings. Thus we will best seek first the kingdom of God and its righteousness and find all other things added in proportion to our real needs as new creatures.

"SPEAK, LORD, FOR THY SERVANT HEARETH"

1 Samuel 3:6-14.—DECEMBER 15.

Samuel, the Prophet, is one of the grand, strong characters of Old Testament times. The story of his early devotion to the Lord and his obedience and perseverance in well doing, constitutes a grand lesson, not only for young Christians, but also for those more advanced in years, including parents. As the story of Ruth gives us glimpses of a time of life of the Israelites such as is generally obscured by the records of wars and troubles, so also does the story of Samuel. He was of the tribe of Levi, already consecrated to the Lord, and accepted. An insight into the deep piety of his parents is given in the first chapter of the Book. A child born under such circumstances of prayer and devotion to the Lord, could not, under natural laws, fail to be noble minded and religiously inclined. Would that we could impress this thought upon all Christians who become parents—that their children should be devoted to the Lord from the moment of conception! and daily prayer and effort should be made that pre-natal influences might all conduce to the highest mental, moral and physical welfare of the offspring. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" asked the Prophet, and he answers, "Not one." Our expectation should not, therefore, be that the children even of the saints would be absolutely perfect; but we are to remember that the Lord accepts the heart, the intention, the will; and that agreeably to his arrangement of nature, the mind, the intention, the will of the parents may be expressed in their child. True, the imperfect mind cannot even grasp or picture perfect things, but it can approximate them, and in that same proportion it can impress that approximation of character upon the offspring.

UNEQUALLY YOKED PARENTS

There is an old adage that "blood will tell"—that is, that culture and good breeding will be marked in the offspring. It is surely a fact that character will tell. Christians, thoroughly devoted to the Lord and seeking day by day to know and to do the divine will, and who are under

the instruction of the holy Spirit in the School of Christ and somewhat developed in grace and in knowledge of the truth, whose minds are transformed by the renewing of the holy Spirit, and their affections set upon things above, will surely mark and impress the spiritual qualities of their own hearts upon the natural offspring. Such children, well born and devoted to the Lord from conception, will, of course, in childhood be trained by the same parents in the ways of the Lord, in the ways of righteousness, of justice, of truth and of love. Thus begotten and thus trained, it seems very improbable that they should afterward depart from the way of the Lord, or that they should permanently remain transgressors, even though temporarily misled through temptation.

While the Lord has directed his children not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers, nevertheless, where the yoking or marriage has occurred prior to their covenant with the Lord, he has arranged that the fruit of their marriage, their children, shall be accounted as the Lord's through the consecrated parent; and his blessing will accordingly be with the consecrated child regardless of the fact that one of its parents was an unbeliever. The Apostle clearly states this in 1 Cor. 7:14.

It is a serious error—and one into which some Christians have fallen—to suppose parentage to be dishonorable or sinful, some even claiming that "original sin" was of this sort. The Scriptures teach quite to the contrary, declaring that "marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled." We are to remember, too, that the divine plan for the propagation of the race was arranged and the command to multiply and fill the earth was given before sin entered the world—before the disobedience in Eden. The Apostle severely reprimands those "forbidding to marry," and distinctly says, in his letter to Timothy, "I will, therefore, that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully."—1 Tim. 5:14.

Neither is this in conflict with his declarations in 1 Cor. 7, that "he that marrieth doeth well, but he that marrieth not doeth better." In his letter to Timothy he is speaking of the younger persons of the congregation; whereas in his advice in Corinthians he is addressing such members of the church as had made a full consecration of themselves to the Lord, and were seeking to run in the race course toward the mark for the prize. And our advice to others on this subject should be strictly along these inspired lines. The advice not to marry will usually be found helpful to those who have made a full consecration of themselves to the Lord, who will find that they can accomplish more in the Lord's service free, as far as possible, from earthly obligations and division of heart. But for others who are not new creatures, though moral and well disposed, marriage is the reasonable and proper expectation of life according to divine arrangement; it should not be hindered, but should be counseled as wisely as possible.

CONSECRATION OF OUR CHILDREN

We are to recognize a difference between the consecrated parents of Samuel and their prayers for a son, and the proper prayers of consecrated people of the present time. Only since Pentecost have the Lord's people been privileged to be "new creatures in Christ Jesus," begotten of the holy Spirit; and such seek and pray for spiritual rather than natural children;—by spending their lives as did their Master, seeking to transform children of the first Adam into spiritual children of God. It is in view of this, and when addressing spirit-begotten ones, that the Apostle declares, that "he that marrieth not doeth better,"—because he will, generally speaking, find the unmarried condition most favorable to his new ambitions.

Born in response to prayer and consecration, Samuel was, doubtless, a remarkable boy; and his parents showed the sincerity of their prayer in the fact that he was early brought to the high priest at Shiloh and formally presented to the Lord's service. We read that this was when he was "weaned," but are not to suppose that it was when as an infant he was weaned from the breast; but, rather, interpreting the word on a larger scale, we should understand it was when he was weaned from his mother, in the sense of being able to get along without her care: this was probably when he was from ten to twelve years of age.

We are often surprised that Christian parents, begotten of the holy Spirit, do not manifest more of this spirit which actuated the parents of Samuel. Many seemingly consecrated people hold back their most precious possessions, their children, from the Lord, and incline to devote them to some worldly calling in life—medicine, law, industry. Whether their course is prompted by too great humility or too great selfishness, it is not our province to determine; but seemingly they either have not the faith to believe that the Lord would accept their offering, or they cherish, perhaps but half unconsciously, a desire to see their children prosper after the manner of the world, and fear that their consecration to the Lord might in some manner blight their earthly prospects. What a great mistake! Do not such parents know that it is their privilege to present themselves to the Lord and all they have, including their children? and do they not know, too, that "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he added no sorrow with it"? (Prov. 10:22) Can they not realize that it is better to be a door-keeper in the house of the Lord than to dwell in the tents of wickedness? and that greater happiness would accompany a devoted life, even though spent in poverty, than could come through any other course, even though surrounded by every luxury? Have they not learned these lessons from their own experiences? and can they not apply them likewise to their own children?

"TRAIN UP A CHILD"

Samuel ministered to Eli in the temple; that is, he served the high priest—who was specially the Lord's servant and representative—in his dwelling apartments which were close by the tabernacle,—for the temple was not yet built. Samuel's parents, in thus subjecting him early in life to the duties of a servant, were really putting him in a most excellent school. In our opinion it is a mistake to suppose that the early years of life—from ten to eighteen—should be largely spent in play; not only is the wisdom of bringing children early into positions of responsibility, and more or less of routine and drudgery, exemplified in the case of Samuel, but it is also exemplified in the cases of many of the prominent people of this land today. Mr. Carnegie, whose fame is world-wide, entered early upon the drudgery of life as a telegraph messenger. Mr. Edison, whose fame as an electrician is also world-wide, began life's drudgery as a newsboy. And thus it is in perfect accord with the experiences of today in worldly things that we perceive that the consecration of Samuel as a

servant of Eli at an early age had probably much to do with the firmness and grandeur of his character when, subsequently, he became the Lord's Prophet, and the last and the greatest of Israel's judges.

Our observation is that there is no more common mistake made by parents than that of supposing their children could not properly understand or appreciate religious things at an early age—say twelve years. The experience of Samuel and our own experience and that of many others assure us that some of the deepest religious sentiments may be experienced as early as twelve years of age. This should be watched for by the parents and should be cultivated with much more care than the tenderest flowers in their gardens. The flowers of veneration, spirituality, hope, faith, trust, in the child-mind need and should have tenderest care and watering and weeding and assistance. The parent by nature and by divine direction occupying a responsible position as gardener to these, must appreciate flowers in the hearts of his own family; and if he neglect his responsibilities he is culpable and will surely suffer, not only disappointment in respect to his children in the future, but suffer also in that he will be the loser of certain blessings in his own heart; because it is a part of the divine arrangement that he that watereth others shall himself be watered.

Public responsibilities and duties, and trying to save other people's children, can never excuse any Christian parent from his responsibilities toward his own children; nor can he shift his responsibilities upon Sunday School teachers. His neglect of duty will surely work to his own disadvantage as well as to the disadvantage of his offspring; and if in the past he has been negligent in this matter he cannot too soon rectify matters, though he will need to pray for and to seek to exercise greater wisdom in order to overcome his past neglect.

Dr. Haslett, in his *Pedagogical Bible School*, submits the following as the sum of his findings from various statistics:—

Out of 8,424 conversions—

5,054 occurred between the ages of 12-20 years.

3,183 occurred between the ages of 16-25 years.

187 occurred at 25 years and over.

GOD'S MOUTHPIECE TWELVE YEARS OLD

The story of the Lord's first message to Samuel is beautiful in its simplicity. The boy evidently was accustomed to obeying the calls of Eli for various services at various times, and to this end had his sleeping apartments near by, Eli being advanced in life, about seventy-eight years. Three times the Lord called Samuel, and he answered, "Here am I," and went to Eli. It was after the third call that Eli instructed him to say, "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth."

The record is that for a long time such a message from the Lord had been "precious," that is, scarce: Eli, although a good man, and sincere and faithful and kind in his dealings with Samuel, had been too lax in his dealings with his own sons, who were priests and had much to do with services of the Tabernacle, and who, therefore, in every sense of the word should have been pious and exemplary men. The Lord had already sent Eli a warning message respecting his sons who were profligate and open transgressors, not only in financial affairs, but also in morals. Eli should have realized his responsibilities and should have checked their wrong course and, if necessary, should have dismissed them from the service of the Tabernacle even though they were his own sons; but in proportion as he had grown weak in mind and body, they had grown strong, self-willed and impious, and the old man seems not to have had the necessary strength of character to deal with them. The Lord's message delivered to Samuel was in respect to Eli's family and the punishment that should come upon them for their sins, which were much more grievous in view of the fact that they were the exemplars and instructors of the people.

A KIND AND INDULGENT PARENT

There are two kinds of unfaithful parents:

(1) The harsh, cruel, wicked, who not only inbreed an evil disposition, but inculcate the same by precept and example. If both parents be of this stripe the child's condition is almost a hopeless one for the present life. The restitution conditions of the Millennium will be needed to eradicate the taint. Yet where one parent belongs to God the result may under divine providence be the reverse—the child may not only be better born, but discerning the evil of his parent's course may thereby be repelled and prepared to take the opposite course.

(2) Some "kind and indulgent parents" are very unfaithful to their trust. With our children partakers of the general weaknesses of the race, a kindness and indulgence which allow noxious weeds to develop in their characters is gross unkindness, very reprehensible in the sight of God and those

in accord with his Word. Indeed, it is possible that this term, "kind and indulgent parent," is frequently used very inappropriately. In many instances it would be more truthful if less polite to say, "A weak and incompetent parent."

Surely all proper parents from the divine viewpoint will be kind to their children, and all such should be glad to be indulgent also, to the extent that the best interests of the child will permit—and not one inch further. But while the correcting rod must not be spared when necessary nor used when unnecessary, nor too severely—yet the best rule where possible, where the disposition of the child will permit, is *the rule of love*. Beginning early the parents' love combined with firmness should so mould the child's mind that it would have absolute confidence in the parents' love and in their loyalty to God's regulations in all of life's interests. To such a child the look of sadness and regret or the tear of sorrow on the parent's face will be more efficacious than many blows and much violent language.

JUDGE ELI UNFAITHFUL TO GOD

Judge Eli's weakness as a parent led him to unfaithfulness to God. His is not a sample of an "over-coming" character: he more nearly represented the character of the "great company." He had many good qualities. No vulgar sin is laid at his door. In many respects he placed the honor of God far beyond his personal interests. We see no manifestation of selfish ambition on his part opposing Samuel's advancement. Indeed to his credit be it noted that he fathered Samuel well. He disapproved the course of his sons, but, aged, he failed of the courage to denounce their course with proper vigor, as the Lord's words seem to intimate. We are not to forget, either, that among the twelve directly under Lord's instruction one exercising his free will became a traitor. We fear that, however *trained*, those who turn out badly are generally not well-endowed in their begetting: though here also we remember Satan as an example of a perfect begetting and perfect training, which were lost before the energy of his ambitions.

Eli's experience with his wayward sons calls for our sympathy, even though he brought his difficulties upon himself by reason of his neglect of the early training of them in the ways of the Lord, in the ways of his righteousness. Doubtless he often looked at the faithful lad who ministered to him so patiently and industriously, and wished that his sons had been of similar disposition; but the time so to wish advantageously and profitably was long gone by; they should have been begotten in the spirit of consecration, and trained in conformity therewith, and the Lord's Word for it is that when they were old they would not have departed from it. There is a lesson for parents here, too; the fact that the Lord's service is to be considered of primary importance and is to be defended even at the expense of their own flesh and blood.

THE VOICE OF THE LORD

In the morning Samuel hesitated to tell his kind master, Eli, the unfavorable message he had received of the Lord in the night; but Eli was anxious to know whatever the Lord had to say, and importuned until Samuel told him all. There is a good lesson here for the Lord's people—a lesson of humility and kindness; the lad might have felt puffed up to think that the Lord, who so seldom spoke to any, had now spoken to him; he might have felt himself honored and above Eli, in that the message spoke of the discomfiture of the

latter; pride might have made him boastful and inconsiderate of the feelings of his master so that he would have taken delight in telling him of the calamities that would come, and how greatly he had been honored of the Lord. Samuel, on the contrary, exhibited the spirit of meekness, apparently not even considering the honor that had come to him; but, rather, sympathizing with his master, he would have preferred not to burden his heart with the message of calamity.

The Lord is speaking now to some of his faithful ones through his Word, through his "knock" (Rev. 3:20), which tells us of his presence, through the signs which mark the incoming of the new dispensation: are any disposed now to be haughty and proud and boastful because the Lord has permitted them to hear his voice and to know something of his plan and of the calamities coming upon Babylon? Should they not rather be filled with humility so that self would be lost sight of entirely? Should not all favored of the Lord speak of the trouble coming upon Babylon sympathetically, with a disposition to assist to an escape, rather than a disposition to gloat over and rejoice in coming troubles in which present systems will be completely overthrown?

The Lord speaks in our day in a different manner from that in which he spoke in olden times: as the Scriptures declare, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." (Heb. 1:1, 2) The Word of the Lord is still precious and scarce in that it is not, at the present time, given to all, but only to a certain class; as it is written, "He that hath an ear to hear let him hear." The majority of mankind hath no ear to hear at the present time, no eye to see the glorious beauty of God's plan. As the Apostle explains, "The god of this world hath blinded their minds"—earthly things, earthly ambitions, earthly hopes, earthly calls and voices, distract their attention, fill their capacity; but blessed are our eyes for they see, and our ears for they hear, and blessed shall we be if, like Samuel, when we hear the Lord's message we respond promptly, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." Such as thus respond shall be taught of God—by the Word of his grace—the words of the Lord Jesus, and the words of his inspired apostles—instructed and guided in the understanding of these through the holy Spirit, through the various helps and channels and agents which the Lord is pleased to use—perhaps a tract, perhaps a book, perhaps a letter, perhaps a conversation, perhaps a sermon.

He who would continue to be taught of the Lord must continue to listen for his voice, continue to be in the hearing and obeying attitude of heart. The difficulty with some apparently is that their own wills are not fully extinct, dead—that their consecration is not complete; hence while consecrated enough to wish not to disobey the Lord's voice, they have certain ideas of their own respecting what his voice should say, and they prefer to interpret his message in conformity to their own preferences: they will to do more or less their own wills, and will to hear the Lord's voice directing them in accordance with their own wills. This is a most dangerous situation and is generally accompanied by self-conceit and self-assertion and will ultimately lead far from the Christian's goal. Let each of us resolve by the Lord's grace that we will out of honest heart continually seek to hear the pure Word of God, and that with a desire to obey it as far as we are able.

THE HOLY ANOINTING OIL

Dear Brother Russell:—

I have several thoughts regarding the typical anointing oil which I desire to have your opinion on. They have been very faith-inspiring to myself, and so I desire to impart them to others, but hesitate to do so before laying them before you.

In Ex. 30:23 we read God's instructions to Moses regarding the holy anointing oil, as follows: "Take thou also unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh 500 shekels, and of sweet cinnamon half so much, even 250 shekels, and of sweet calamus 250 shekels (v. 244), and of cassia 500 shekels after the shekel of the sanctuary, and of olive oil an hin."

Notice here it reads "principal spices," in contrast to v. 34, same chapter, where it reads "sweet spices" used in the incense or holy perfume. So these principal spices would represent principal things which would go to make up the anointing which we receive to become priests and kings with Christ.

As far as I know the meanings of these spices are in no way significant, but compared with other Bible verses we may see their significance. In Ex. 31:2-5 we have Bezaleel, re-

ferred to as the builder of the tabernacle, a type of Christ. His ancestry is typical of the existence of Christ on the various planes he has lived. Bezaleel was son of Uri, he in turn son of Hur, and he in turn a son of Judah. Now Judah means praised; so was Christ praised in his prehuman existence, referring to the glory he possessed with the Father before the world was. Hur, the next offspring, is representative of Christ's humiliation; as the word Hur means grave, so Christ humbled himself even unto death, yea, to the ignominious death on the cross, down into the grave. From there he came forth with the right to life for every human being, and is the Light of the world, as Uri signifies light; and now he is the shadow of the Almighty, the robe of righteousness provided by God for us, as signified in the word Bezaleel, "shadow of the Almighty."

V. 4 says that this Bezaleel could devise cunning works to work in gold (the divine nature) and in silver (the spirit nature—great company) and in brass (the perfect human nature), showing Christ can complete work in all the planes of existence. V. 5, And in the cutting of stones (polishing

the jewels), to set them (as the Father pleases), and in the carving of timber (the fallen race) to make all manner of workmanship (as restitution will produce for the race). This verse shows the present condition of the race and the church, the unfinished material. Verse 2, referring to this Bezaleel, says, "And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom and in understanding, and in knowledge and in all manner of workmanship." This is the typical anointing of Bezaleel; and the antitypical anointing of Christ recorded in Isa. 11:2 contains the identical component parts as that of Bezaleel, viz.: "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord." The only difference in the two verses is in respect to the terms "counsel and might" and "workmanship," but both embody the same idea, i.e., deputyship and ability, or how to go about a matter and the ability to accomplish the same. These three verses parallel as follows:

EXODUS 30:23 HOLY ANOINTING OIL	EXODUS 31:3 BEZALEEL	ISAIAH 11:2 CHRIST
Olive oil, <i>an hin</i>	Filled with the Spirit of God.	Spirit of Lord <i>rest</i> upon him.
Myrrh, 500	Wisdom	Wisdom
Cinnamon, 250	Understanding	Understanding
Calamus, 250	Knowledge	Knowledge
Cassia, 500	Workmanship	Counsel and might

In the above parallel we find knowledge parallel with calamus and understanding with cinnamon, and of each a like quantity is prescribed, even 250 shekels. So we would also expect in our anointing from above to find our knowledge and understanding equal—that is we would have the understanding of all the knowledge *received of God*, so that seeing we might discern and hearing we might understand.

For example, we read in the Scriptures that Christ is a corresponding price for our sins. Now, if we fear Jehovah we have that knowledge, for the fear of God is the beginning of knowledge. (Prov. 1:7.) When we see how that Christ became a perfect fleshly man and was an exact counterpart of Adam and gave up his life for Adam's, we see, or understanding tells us, how he is a cover for our sins. So knowledge *from God* is accompanied by its equal of understanding, and this is how we have become established in the faith. If God gives us knowledge he also gives us a test on that knowledge, and fortifies it with the understanding thereof.

Myrrh, which represents and is parallel with wisdom, is equal in amount with calamus and cinnamon combined, 500 shekels of myrrh and 250 shekels each of calamus and cinnamon. So we find God in the anointing also gives wisdom equal to our knowledge and understanding combined. Wisdom is knowing what to do. To illustrate: Knowledge tells us that God loves his only begotten Son; understanding tells us it was on account of his cheerful obedience even unto death that the Father took such delight in him; wisdom then draws the inference, that if we would also be well pleasing to the Father we must do as Jesus did, follow in his steps, get our minds into the same frame as Jesus had his, for if this mind is not in us which was also in Jesus, we are not pleasing to the Father. Again, the knowledge that Jesus died for our sins brings responsibility, and the understanding of the ransom brings added responsibility, and our responsibility is equal to what we see we ought to do, or our wisdom.

Workmanship may also be translated deputyship, but never means work or labor. It has the two ideas embodied in itself that are expressed in its parallel in Isa. 11:2, viz., counsel and might. Counsel here means advice, or how to do a thing; might here means the ability to perform. Now, cassia, which represents workmanship or counsel and might, amounted to 500 shekels, the same as myrrh, which represented wisdom, or knowing what to do. So God, after showing us our responsibility or what we should do, accompanies it with an equal amount of advice or information how to do it, and also enough ability to perform what is expected of us. All that is expected of us is to will—a full consecration to the Lord and his serv-

ice—and all the rest he will supply in knowledge, understanding: knowledge of what we should do and ability and information how to do it. With more than this he cannot anoint us.

This mixture of oil and spices was well ground together, so that each drop of oil contained the four spices in the same proportion as the whole mass; so each drop of anointing we receive that comes down from above has all its constituents in the proper proportion. God gives no knowledge except for a purpose, and establishes our faith by giving the understanding thereof, then shows us what that knowledge is for, by showing us what is expected of us, and also gives us the advice and ability needed for the accomplishment thereof, and we must make active consecration to complete the Lord's will.

Chap. 30, v. 32, in Rotherham's translation reads, "And according to the proportions thereof shall ye not make any like it; holy is it." V. 33, "Whosoever compoundeth any like [according to the proportions thereof] shall be cut off from among his people." This would show us that after the same proportions thereof no other anointing would be allowed. So we might expect many imitation anointing oils, using the same ingredients, but not in the same proportions as the true anointing oil, having knowledge and understanding equal and balanced, and these in turn accompanied by their equal of wisdom and counsel and might. Some imitations may be so close that only God could tell the difference; hence these are false brethren.

In Eccl. 9:10 we read, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do with thy might; for there is no work nor device nor knowledge nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest." The word translated device here is translated reason and account in Eccl. 7, verses 25 and 27, respectively. All three words are closely related to understanding and are the results of understanding. Solomon here uses these four—wisdom, knowledge, device (or understanding) and works (result of workmanship)—to show that the absence of these produces physical death, or is the sign of physical death, and conversely their presence signifies physical life. So if we have been anointed with spiritual wisdom, understanding, knowledge and workmanship, or counsel and might, and are in a state of activity in our consecration, we will have spiritual wisdom, spiritual knowledge, and our understanding and counsel will give us spiritual device, so we will know how to form character and bring forth spiritual fruits, and our spiritual might received from God will be the power to bring about our spiritual works. If we possess these we will be spiritually alive, and if not we will be dead in trespasses and sins. Paul, in Col. 1:9, 10, prays that the saints may be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all spiritual wisdom and spiritual understanding—being fruitful in every good work and walking worthy of the Lord—these very same four again.

These four produce the fruits of the Spirit, therefore they are the principal spices. The odor emanating from such a typically anointed one is symbolical of the fruits of the Spirit we show forth—the more anointing the more fruits; and surely it is desirable to be in the presence of one so antitypically anointed.

The oil being olive illustrates something divine and is representative of the divine power and supervision used in the anointing of the antitypical priesthood. The oil was the means of distributing the spices over the body, and each drop carried the four spices in the same relative proportion as that of the whole mass. So whatever amount of anointing a member in Christ receives from the Head, it has its constituents of knowledge, etc., in their proper relative proportions. The oil may be the Bible, which carries all these four elements of the anointing to us, God's power being used in connection therewith in anointing us.

Hoping I have not wearied or bothered you, dear brother, but not wanting to have it for myself, I considered it my duty to communicate this to you. I have hesitated much in writing to you, but have done as I considered it my duty. Thanking you for all the blessing received from you and asking an interest in your prayers that I may remain in Christ to the end,

Your brother in Christ,

M. E. RIEMER—Mo.

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

DATE OF NEHEMIAH'S COMMISSION

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

With reference to first complete paragraph of Vol. II., p. 67, the following facts, culled from "Tregelles on Daniel," regarding Ussher's position in the matter of the date of Nehemiah's commission, may be of interest to WATCH TOWER

readers, seeing that he is deservedly considered as an authority on chronology.

"Archbishop Ussher drew up a scheme of chronology which is commonly followed rather for convenience than for absolute accuracy. About a hundred and fifty years ago Bishop Lloyd undertook to affix Ussher's dates to our English Bibles, but