

has been served by the *Eagle*. We invite the assistance and co-operation in this service of all who love the Lord and the truth. Orders may be sent in at once. But we advise against the using of this special issue in other places where the ministers have not entered into such a combine and are not thus

actively serving the adversary. It is, and should always be, the policy of God's people, so far as possible, to live peaceably. We do not wish to make an attack upon anybody, but merely to repel attacks and to set the people free for their benefit.

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EVIL-DOERS AND BUSYBODIES

"But let none of you suffer as . . . an evil-doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters."—1 Peter 4:15.

Assuredly none of the Lord's people could willingly be evil-doers. He who would wilfully do evil would not have the Lord's Spirit, but that of the adversary. Such being the case, the worst that could be said against any of the truly consecrated surely would be that he had been overtaken in a fault, or that he had some weakness of the flesh, or that by the snare of the adversary he had been led into doing something which his heart disapproved. But evil deeds, even though unintentional, are to be guarded against carefully. "Let none of you suffer as an evil-doer"—not one—at any time—under any circumstances.

But now we come to the second part of the Apostle's warning—busybodying. The saints seem as liable as others to become busybodies and to suffer for so doing. We have sometime thought that the Lord's consecrated people are more inclined to be busybodies than are others. They have higher standards than others. Their love of righteousness is greater than before, and their hatred of iniquity is greater. There is continually a temptation, therefore, not to be content with minding one's own business, but to advise and to seek to regulate everybody and everything.

Of course there is a duty devolving upon every parent to inquire more or less into the affairs of his children, or of those in any manner under his direct care, for whom he is responsible. But even in this he should seek to recognize individual rights and privacies, and not allow his sense of duty and responsibility to impel him to probe into every little matter. A certain reasonable amount of responsibility should be thrown upon children, and they should have a general idea of what is expected of them. They should be required to measure up to that standard, unless something positively indicates to the contrary. The spirit of busybodying is condemned by the Apostle, and all of God's people should be on guard against it.

Our experience is that busybodying is a fruitful source of difficulty in the church—in all the ecclesias. A clear knowledge of present truth seems rather to increase this difficulty. As in families a wrong feeling often obtains, which impels each member to want to know all about the affairs of every other member, so in the church there is also a tendency to meddle, to inquire about, to interfere in the matters of others—to busybody. In some cases there seems to be a disposition to try to hunt up everything connected with each other, and to sit in judgment upon each other.

The difficulty is a lack of love. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor." It rejoices not to find flaws; it seeks not for them. It surmises no evil—rather it surmises good. Let each of the Lord's people judge himself in this matter and see to what extent he has been a busybody in the affairs of others. Let each decide in his own case that the fault, in proportion as he has it, is a lack of the spirit of love, and let each in that proportion go to the Lord prayerfully, earnestly seeking to be built up in the quality of love.

Well do we know that he who loves not a brother whom he has seen has no assurance that he really loves God whom he has not seen. We may safely conclude that there is some of the gall of bitterness in the heart, if we take pleasure in seeking flaws in the flesh of the members of the body of Christ. Their flesh, justified by the Redeemer and consecrated, becomes his flesh. Whoever, therefore, is a faultfinder and busybody in the affairs of the brethren is doing this against the flesh of Jesus. "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest."—Acts 9:5; 22:8.

ENSNARED BY THE ADVERSARY

Our confidence in the brethren is such that we cannot believe that any of them would willingly and intentionally, or of preference, take the loveless course of injury. Our thought is that the adversary is on the alert to ensnare God's people and to develop in them the spirit of busybodying and lovelessness, under the guise of duty, love of righteousness, justice, etc. They overlook the fact that God neither authorized us to judge one another, nor to exact justice from each other. He neither authorized his people to chastise each other, nor to punish each other in any manner. He has never authorized his people to become inquisitors, investigators, busybodies.

On the contrary, he has told us to "judge nothing before the time," and that he will attend to this matter. Is it not written, "The Lord will judge his people"? Are we afraid that he is incompetent? Shall we attempt to be wiser than he? Shall we take into our own hands matters which he said that we should leave in his hands? If we do so, we shall be sure to get ourselves into difficulty, and perhaps get others into difficulty as well.

Whoever busybodies will suffer. It may be that the victim also will suffer and that many will be defiled, but we may be sure that the busybodies themselves will not escape. The punishment of the busybody in part no doubt will be the rupture of his own relationship with God—the loss of his own peace and joy and fellowship with the holy Spirit. This will be his reward for busybodying.

If a brother and a sister in the church seem to have difficulty, mind your own business, and allow them to settle the matter between themselves. If they are related as parents and children, let them adjust the matter by themselves, and learn whatever lessons the Lord as their Judge and Teacher will give them. If they are husband and wife, the matter is the same. Let them alone. Do not busybody. Even if one of them should come to you and ask advice, be slow to give it—decline to hear the case—follow the Lord's counsel. Advise the one who complains that the Lord has given instructions, and that it is not your province to interfere—that Matthew 18:15-17 directs the course to be pursued.

See that you have nothing to do with such a case unless it come to you directly in line with this arrangement which the Lord has provided. Otherwise you are busybodying and will make trouble for yourselves and for others. If called into the family mix-up, rather regret the necessity than be eager to nose into their affairs. Advise them first in the best way you know how, to adjust matters between themselves, reminding them of the words of Jesus, "That which God hath joined together let no man put asunder," and then see that you do nothing to put them asunder or to help to complete the separation of spirit which already has started.

Remember that as the Lord's representative you have no authority whatever to be in the least a disturber, but are commissioned only to be a peacemaker. When you are called in, in such a case, try to be just, fair, reasonable, in full accord with the Golden Rule in every word that you shall utter. Those who may hope to be entrusted with the judgment of the world in the future (1 Corinthians 6:2) must qualify now by a development of a high sense of mercy and love, as well as of justice.

BUSYBODYING AN EVIDENCE OF PRIDE

But, says one, is it not a part of our duty to help keep the church pure? And in order to do so, should we not be on the alert? If, therefore, we see a husband and a wife, or a brother and a sister, or parents and children out of accord, are we not in duty bound to pry into their affairs, in order to see if we cannot set them straight?

That is exactly the busybody's spirit. We are mentioning it because a great many of the Lord's dear people who mean the very best do not know what busybodying is while they are doing it. Mind your own affairs! If you get too busy watching others, the adversary will take advantage of you. So long as the outward conduct of any brother or sister is reasonable and fair, justice and love both say that you should not meddle with them, in the sense of trying to mind their business. Content yourself with setting them a good example of meekness, faith, patience, brotherly-kindness, love. Then if they ever need advice, they may voluntarily come to you. And then will be your time to show your moderation and to give them advice as an oracle of God, in harmony with Matthew 18:15-17—and nothing more.

But, says another, does not St. Paul criticize the church at Corinth because they had in their midst one who had grievously sinned? And did he not upbraid the church for their failure to judge and rid themselves of such a person? Quite true. But that was a case of open, wilful, acknowledged sin, disgraceful to the individual and to all with whom he

associated. And so it should be today. If any one lives in open sin, and acknowledges it, and boasts of it, the case should be promptly taken note of by the church along the lines of Matthew 18:15-18. If the erring one still continues in a wrong attitude, in open sin, the final step should be his complete separation from the church. Until he has made a complete reform, he should be thoroughly disowned by the Church.

Surely such cases are rare among the Lord's people, and equally rare should be the procedure which the Apostle suggests for such a case. The Apostle is not suggesting inquisition into the past lives of all those who constitute the church of Christ. On the contrary, in one of his epistles he intimates that he knew full well that many who were of the church had at one time been quite disreputable characters.

THE GREATEST THING IN THE UNIVERSE

PART II—PHILOSOPHY OF THE ATTITUDE OF SYMPATHY

"Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." "For if ye do not forgive those who trespass against you, neither will your Father in heaven forgive you." This means that if we would insist upon having from others abject acknowledgment of everything that is wrong, and if we carry this matter of judgment to an extreme, it would indicate that our own hearts are in a wrong condition. And then the best thing that could be done for us by the Lord would be to give us some of our own medicine. By this he would be teaching us a corrective lesson, that thus we might become sympathetic toward others.

This matter, then, of forgiveness and sympathy toward the world, is one that God inculcates or enjoins upon his children after they come into his family. And this is in order to give us education. "For what son is he whom the father correcteth not?" "For if we be without chastisement, . . . then are . . . we not sons." These lessons are intensified to us as we grow in grace and in knowledge.—Hebrews 12:7, 8.

As our knowledge increases, we see how all fell through one man's disobedience. And this gives us a basis for sympathy. And our sympathy increases as we become more mature children of God. God desires this, that by the time we are ready to graduate, we will be very helpful. This should become the pleasure of our hearts—to be sympathetic with our enemies, no matter how they treat us. We know that they are doing these things because of the adversary's influence over them. And we should desire to bless them and to do them all the good we can. The fact that they have done evil to us should not alter our attitude toward them—to do good unto all men as we have opportunity, praying for those who despitefully use us and persecute us.

The thought would not be that we should especially devote our prayers to our enemies and persecutors, but rather that we should pray for them instead of against them. Some who are immature in spiritual things might think, "I will pray to God to punish them." But Jesus says we are not to do that. "Pray for your enemies." What shall we ask for them? He does not tell us this. The best thing we could ask for them would be that we might be used, or useful, if possible, in breaking this superstition upon them, that the eyes of their understanding might be opened. That is the very best thing we could ask for them. We may pray for them along that line, and God will bless us. And if it is possible for us to be helpful to them, God will show us how to do it.

JUSTICE FIRST, LOVE FOLLOWED

God is very great. We are very small. It is a wonderful thing to be informed that God loves us! The heathen religions seem to recognize nothing of this kind. The thought that pervades their votaries is that their gods need to be placated, or they will do them injury. And as for a God of love—that is a thought peculiar to the teachings of the Bible, and this feature of his character is not clearly exhibited in the Old Testament scriptures—in his dealings with the Israelites. God manifested most plainly his justice, and allowed the penalty to come upon the sinner. We are sure that he loves the angels. But man God placed under a ban and sentence. And year by year and century by century that sentence was executed.

Then the proposition was made by the Lord that Israel might come back into his favor, if they would keep the law; and it again looked favorable for them. But Israel failed. When man became degraded, sick, dying, humanity lost their beauty in God's sight. Man lost the gem-like qualities that made him pleasing to God. "We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God."

We come down to the New Testament times, and find a

He says, "And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."—1 Corinthians 6:11.

It is a wholly mistaken idea that any of us is commissioned to set everybody else right. It betokens a great deal of pride to have such an impression. If some brother and sister do not harmonize very well, let them alone. If they think it best not to be very intimate, let them alone. If they are married, and believe it to be to their best interests to live separate, let them alone—mind your own business. If there is some secret fault, let them alone. "God will judge his people." You have no business to meddle with it, unless he gives you some further commission than we find in the Scriptures.

new thing brought in—a double testimony—that God loved the whole world, even while they were sinners, and also the testimony that he loves the church. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The penalty upon mankind was to perish, as being unfit to live and enjoy God's blessing. God had a sympathetic love for all his creatures who were under such condemnation. How was this love shown? We make inquiries and find out that the first manifestation of his love was that he gave his Son to die for the world. Here he was merely beginning to show us how great he is and how great is his love.

THE BASIS OF GOD'S LOVE

The Scriptures assure us that the great difficulty with mankind is that they are weak, fallen, ignorant, under bonds of superstition and misled by the adversary. It is because God saw that the hearts of humanity are not really in that deplorable condition intentionally or deliberately that he has provided the way of escape. If we were wilfully, intentionally wicked, then the Lord would have no sympathy for us at all. When God looks at us as a race, he perceives that only very few have any knowledge of him and of his character of justice, wisdom, mercy and love, and of the principles of his government. And so God said, I will see what can be done with these creatures; I will make a plan by which every one of them may be recovered through the gift of my beloved Son, the Logos. They shall be lifted up out of sin and degradation, and it will be the only lesson of the exceeding wickedness of sin that they will need throughout eternity. I will make the provision broad enough to include Adam and all his race.

THE MANIFESTATION OF GOD'S LOVE

The first feature of this plan began to be manifested when our Lord Jesus came into the world. So the Scriptures say that Christ "brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." What good tidings did he bring? Blessings for all of humanity who would seek him in honesty and earnestness of heart! He brought the good tidings that all who would manifest their love for him should have eternal life; and that a special class, who would manifest special love for the Lord, might become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ his Son. "So great salvation began to be spoken by our Lord."—2 Tim. 1:10; Heb. 2:3.

Not all can hear this message, because some are so stupid through the blinding of the adversary that they cannot believe it. To such it is not good tidings at all, but foolishness. Such have no ears to hear, the Bible says. Others can hear a little, and say that there is one chance in a million of escaping eternal torment. Others have their eyes and ears more widely open, and these are able to hear something, to appreciate something more than the majority. The Apostle tells us that "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not."—2 Cor. 4:4.

Looking back to the days of Jesus we find that, when he preached, many of the people delighted to hear his words. They said, "Never man spake like this man." He told the people that God loved them. And the people said, The scribes and Pharisees will not have anything to do with us; but this man loves us and tells us that God loves us, that God does not despise even us poor miserable sinners! Oh, "never man spake like this man"!

But their minds not being free, they were not able to appreciate all that he said. They thought that this message which he brought them might be fabrication, and they dared not believe it. They asked, Have any of the scribes and Pharisees believed and become Jesus' disciples? And when they learned that not many of them had, they said: Perhaps we are incom-

petent to judge; these are our leaders, we must follow them.

But there were some who were able to take in the matter more fully. And to these Jesus said, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear." Then to these who could see and hear Jesus gave certain special lessons applicable to them—and not only to them, but to a certain like company, or class, all the way down through the age. He told them that because they manifested a responsiveness of heart they were pleasing to him. He told them that in proportion as they would make progress in imitating him, in that same proportion they would come into fellowship with the Father and become participants in his love.

And when some took this step of consecration, Jesus told them, "The Father himself loveth you"—He loves you because you have taken a stand for righteousness; because when you saw these principles of righteousness you were willing to do in accordance therewith. And the Father loves you because you are seeking to walk in the narrow way—the way which is difficult. The other way is a broad way, leading now to death and destruction. But this narrow way that I am pointing out to you, my dear disciples, is the way to life. It will cost you a great deal to be my disciples. But the Father will love you, and I will love you, and we will manifest ourselves to you. And although you will have trials and difficulties you will have the peace of God ruling in your hearts. Then the disciples said they would leave all to follow him.

HOW TO KEEP OURSELVES IN GOD'S LOVE

The Apostle Jude admonishes, "Keep yourselves in the love of God." Here the Apostle is addressing those who have passed from the condition of the world into this special love of God—those whom He has brought into his family, as his children by adoption, through Christ Jesus. God does not love us because we are doing great and wonderful things. His special love for us began when he begat us, because of the consecration we had made—because we had entered into the Covenant of Sacrifice. And the Father delights in all those who desire to be sealed with his Spirit—who desire to become his children. He began thus to love us as babes in Christ, and he loves us as we grow stronger, and he will love us to the end!

The Apostle intimates that there is a growth in us. We are babes at first, and then children, then young men, then more fully developed. As we learn the principles of justice which permeate the heavenly Father's character, we are to rejoice in these, and to have no other standards before our mind. We are to say, That is our Father's instruction, our Father's standard. So we become transformed more and more, and all standards other than those of the heavenly Father become more and more displeasing to us.

As we journey along, we need to keep ourselves in the love of God. It is necessary as babes that we should keep ourselves in his love; it is necessary as children; it is necessary when still further developed. How can we do this? By keeping his commandments. Thus we bring the body into subjection to the perfect will of God in Christ. Whoever does this finds himself growing. Day by day we are to grow and increase and become more and more Godlike; so we are more and more transformed as the days go by. Thus are we to keep ourselves in his love.

But if at any time during the race we should drop out and cease to cultivate these qualities, cease to be obedient to God, then we would cease more and more to have his love, until finally we would cease to be in his love, and the curse, the wrath of God, would abide on us. Thus we would be in a far worse condition than at first, because in the second case it would be a matter of knowledge, whereas in the first case it was a matter of ignorance, a matter of heredity. In this worse condition God would have no sympathy for us at all.

Thus it will be with the world in the future, when they will be brought in God's providence to a full knowledge and full opportunity, when they shall come to understand God and his righteousness. If they do not seek to be in harmony with him, they will be destroyed in the second death.—1 Tim. 2:4; Acts 3:22, 23.

OUR HIGHEST AMBITION

The Lord Jesus said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Our love for God and God's love for us are two different matters, of course. We reverence God even before we love him. We do not know enough about him at first to love him. We know that we have very little power of ourselves, that we are surrounded by difficulties here, and that the adversary has beset us on every side. And so this is the beginning of wisdom, that we should have a reverential fear of God.

As we come to know God more and more, we see that he

would not wish to do harm to any creature. And as we grow in our knowledge of God, our love for him increases accordingly. We grow in our knowledge of how much he loves us. We did not know this at first. God is not pleased to reveal himself to any except those who have his Spirit; therefore the very highest ambition any of us could have would be that we might know him, that we might know more of his wonderful love, his wonderful peace, because to have this knowledge draws us nearer to God. As St. Jude says, we must continue to keep ourselves in the Love of God.

Whoever would come to a full knowledge of God must first come to an appreciation of his Word and must follow a line of obedience such as would enable him to love the Lord and to appreciate his plan. And all things working together—love, appreciation, desire to be obedient—lead onward and upward to the goal which the Lord has set before us.

WHAT CONSTITUTES GOD'S LOVE

The expression Word of God is sometimes used when speaking of the Bible, and sometimes when meaning a message of God. Our allegiance is due to the One from whom we have received every good and every perfect gift. There is an eminent fitness in the thought that the One who has given us life should have our attention to his Word, our obedience to it. Some are disposed to be self-willed; some disposed to regard the words of man, the creeds of man. Such do not pay sufficient attention to the Word of God.

God's Word is the great standard by which all of his people should regulate their lives. We might have some thought respecting the divine plan, or others might make suggestions to us respecting God's will. But any suggestions, whether from ourselves or others, are all to be subject to investigation in the light of God's Word. Of course, we are first to ascertain that the claim of the Bible to be the Word of God is supported by really good evidence; then we are also to notice whether various portions are interpolations, or additions, that we may have the Word of God as pure as possible. But having found the Word of God, we should keep it, in the sense of reverencing it and obeying it. We should strive to regulate our lives and all of our doings by that Word. Whoso keepeth God's Word will as a result find that God's love is perfected in him.—1 John 2:5.

The question then arises, What is God's love? and in what sense can it be perfected in us? The Apostle John evidently refers to that love which is most perfectly represented in God—that love which is pure, free from all selfishness, from all stain—God's love, because it is the right principle, the very underlying principle of his character. And all those who are keeping God's Word must have the same kind of love that he has.

At first we had a duty love. We knew that God had done great things for us, for which we should be very thankful. There was a debt of obligation on us in that respect. Then, too, we loved God because he has indicated that he will give his favor to those who love him. Therefore a measure of selfishness would be in our love for a time. But we believe it is possible for us to have this perfect love of God. If it were perfect works of the flesh that were required, we might doubt our ability to have perfection. But since it is a matter of the heart, it is possible for us to attain it; for we can be pure in heart. So as our hearts become more and more free from selfishness and sin, more and more will this proper, high standard of love be appreciated by us and perfected in us. Our minds would be influenced by this love; and all of our conduct, our thoughts, will come under the same regulation.

To have, then, this love of God perfected in us, would seem to indicate that we would have the very highest ideal—that we love as God loves. We love our neighbor—we realize that he has certain rights which we are glad to respect. We would rather help our neighbors forward than to do anything which might hinder their progress in any way. God is not an envious, jealous, hateful God, but the God of love. God is the true God, and not the one who is set up in our creeds.

As we appreciate the Word of God, it gives us the necessary instruction and guidance. All sin is selfishness, and all selfishness is sin. As the child of God comes to see the character of God more clearly, as he is desirous of being taught of God, he will come under the influence of God's Spirit. And he will study the Word and get clearer insight into it. Thus we grow in the knowledge of God. It is a progressive matter. God wishes all of his intelligent creatures to be animated by the spirit of his Word—love.

LOVE BASED ON FAITH

We see that the love above described would not be a love based on ignorance. On the contrary, it is a love based on a clear knowledge of God, on an undissembled faith, a faith fully appreciating what he has said. For instance, one might

have a certain love for God, and by and by a clearer understanding of God's character might shake that kind of love. God's intention is that mankind shall understand his arrangements thoroughly; and if they then appreciate his character, they will have the undissembled faith, and a love that appreciates all the features of his plan.

We all see that in our experiences God gives us instruction respecting himself. As we come to know him, and to love him because we know him, we are proportionately getting this faith in him of the undissembled kind. It is a faith based on a knowledge of God's character and plan. An angel may be said to have faith—a well rounded out faith. "The Father seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth." And God wishes that all of his intelligent creatures shall worship him from this standpoint of undissembled faith—a faith that is genuine, a faith that is well rounded out, knitted together, a consistent faith. Therefore God wishes to have all men come to the knowledge of the truth.—1 Tim. 2:4.

God's arrangement is that we first make use of what truth we have, and thus have more appreciation; then more knowledge, and then more appreciation. A well rounded out knowledge is not yet possessed by any except the church, and we do not have full knowledge. But it is God's will that we shall all come to an appreciation of the truth. It is not to be merely a knowledge, but a full entering into it that we may the more appreciate it. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee," that we should become personally and intimately acquainted with the Lord. In order to do this, it is necessary that we apply our hearts to this wisdom, that we grow in grace, grow in knowledge, that we may know his love.

This will also be the procedure in the next age. The object of Christ's kingdom will be to bring mankind to a full, clear appreciation of God's character. Such as attain this and sympathetically enjoy God's character will appreciate the principles of justice, love and mercy represented in him. Only as one appreciates these qualities in his own heart can he appreciate them in God. Only those who appreciate them will have everlasting life. Even though such should enjoy the full

thousand years, they still might not be of the class to whom God would give everlasting life.

THE END OF THE LAW IS LOVE

It is not merely faith that is necessary—not even the well rounded out faith—there must be a pure heart also. We could not get the well rounded faith unless we had a pure heart. A pure heart would be a fully consecrated heart—the whole mind given up to the Lord's will. Such a condition is necessary before we can enter into and make progress in the Lord's way. God would not accept us at all unless we had love and purity of heart. And even more than this is necessary. We must maintain it with a good conscience. Our consciences must be able to say, "I have not only a good wish respecting the right, but I have good endeavors." We should not only be able to say, "I did right," but our consciences should be able to say, "I did the very best I was able to do." Anything short of this would not be pleasing to God.

So, then, the end, or intention, of the divine law is to develop in us this love—a love fully consecrated to the Lord, a love like his, a love that will be in accord with a good conscience and an undissembled faith—a faith that is well founded on the teachings of God's Word, a faith that is anxious to know God's will, and that searches the Scriptures and delights in God's law, and that can say as the Psalmist has expressed it prophetically, "I delight to do thy will, O my God!"

A man may discern the principle of justice and say, "There is the standard one must go by." Another sees love, and says, "There is the best standard! Is not that grand? I wish to conform to that fully!" A third recognizes that perfection is the standard of the divine law, and having consecrated himself unreservedly to do the will of God, says, "Thy law, O God, is my delight." This one delights in God's justice, he delights in God's love. He sees more than merely, thou shalt, and thou shalt not. He sees things from God's standpoint. He sees the principles of God's character which govern the universe. So all who will ever come to an appreciation of everlasting life must learn to view matters from the standpoint of love.

CROSSING THE RED SEA

AUGUST 17.—Exodus 14:19-31.

"Before they call, I will answer."—Isaiah 65:24.

The Bible story of Israel's miraculous crossing of the Red Sea, which later overwhelmed the Egyptian army, has long been questioned by agnostics, who also question the large number ascribed to the Israelites—600,000 men, implying a total of 2,000,000 or more. However, the Bible finally is triumphing. Mistranslations and failure properly to interpret figures of speech were the basis of our misunderstandings.

Prof. Flinders Petrie calls attention to the fact that the Hebrew word *alaf* is used in the Scriptures sometimes to mean a thousand and at other times to signify a group, families, or tents, very much in the same way that we use the word regiment as signifying a group of a thousand men, yet often far less in number, especially after a battle. Thus understood, the record, "Judah 74,600," would read, "Judah, seventy-four families, or tents, with six hundred men in all"; "so they set forward, every one after their families, according to the house of their fathers."—Num. 2:34.

Thus reckoned, the entire hosts of the Israelites who left Egypt—men, women and children—might be estimated at about 30,000. Even this was a goodly host to be the descendants of Jacob in but little more than two centuries. That the Israelites were very prolific was evidenced by the Egyptian decree which sought to destroy their children, fearful that eventually they would outnumber the Egyptians.

NECESSITY OF THE MIRACLES

A miracle is not necessarily a violation of a law of Nature. A wonder, an unusual occurrence, indicating an interposition of divine power in human affairs, would be a miracle, even though it conformed to natural laws. God rarely works miracles except where there is a necessity.

Three roads led out of Egypt in the direction of Palestine; but as a military wall extended from the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea to protect against invading armies, these roads had access into Egypt only through strong and guarded iron gates.

One of these roads led through the country of the Philistines, to pass through which so large a body of people would have been prohibited. The second road led through a sandy desert and would have been entirely unsuitable, furnishing no provender nor water. The third road was the one which the Israelites took, leading through the wild mountain regions of Sinai, where they found pasturage.

After the death of Egypt's first-borns and the beginning

of Israel's Exodus, several days elapsed before they reached the Red Sea. Meantime, Pharaoh and his people had measurably recovered from their mourning. Pharaoh perceived that the Israelites, while given the opportunity of leaving Egypt, had wandered about as though undecided which road to take. He concluded that they would be weary of their new freedom and their traveling, and that it would be an easy matter to bring them back. The gates of the wall were ordered closed, and several hundred chariots and footmen were sent to pursue.

Meantime, the Israelites had passed between two mountain ranges, up against the northern arm of the Red Sea—the Gulf of Suez. Apparently the Israelites had gone into a pen, from which there was no escape. Divine providence arranged that a heavy pillar of cloud, or fog, hovered over the camp of the Egyptians, while there was a bright light in the camp of the Israelites. Thus the Egyptians were delayed, and the Israelites moved on until they came to the Sea, and beheld that they were hemmed in. Then they cried to the Lord and to Moses, discouraged, requesting to be permitted to return to Egyptian bondage. They favored a surrender on good terms rather than a conflict.

But the word of the Lord through Moses was that the people should be of good courage, and that soon they would see that Jehovah God would bring them deliverance from their troubles and from their enemies. Meantime, the wind had begun to blow from the north, and gradually the waters receded to the southward, uncovering a ledge and sand bar, upon which the Israelites crossed to the other side. The befogged Egyptians followed them, possibly without realizing that they were passing on land usually covered by water.

As they progressed into the moist sand, the Egyptians experienced fresh difficulties. Chariot wheels became clogged, horses went more slowly, then balked, wheels broke, etc., until the Egyptians began to reason the matter out and decided that, in the figurative language of that time, God had looked upon them with an evil eye out of the pillar of cloud. Possibly there was some manifestation, such as a lightning flash. They concluded to turn backward and give up the chase. Meantime, the direction of the wind had changed, and it was now coming from the south. Before they could extricate themselves, the water was upon them; they were in a quagmire, and were soon overwhelmed.

There is nothing in this account to stagger faith. The United States Government Reports show that the waters of Lake Erie have varied as much as fifteen feet at Toledo, by reason of the change of wind, and without any special hurricane. The thing that has staggered our faith in the past was the statement that the Sea constituted a wall on either side of the Israelites as they crossed over. But the word wall in its broadest sense merely signifies barricade. In the same sense we might say that the United States has the Atlantic Ocean as a protective wall on one side and the Pacific Ocean on the other.

Thus we see that if the Bible is interpreted with a little common sense it is entirely reasonable. More and more Bible students are learning not only of its reasonableness, but also of its wealth of riches of knowledge and wisdom from on High.

THE ANGEL OF THE LORD

The cloudy pillar, or mist, which gave light to the Israelites at night, but darkness to the Egyptians, is spoken of as being the angel of the Lord, or as though the angel of the Lord were in it. We are to bear in mind, however, the broad meaning of the word angel. It signifies messenger. In general, spirit beings are Jehovah's messengers in human affairs. Sometimes, however, human beings are his messengers, as for instance, the Apostle declares that all of God's consecrated people are God's ambassadors, ministers, servants.

But the word angel is Scripturally used in a still broader sense—as signifying the exercise of divine power in connection with human affairs. Thus St. Paul writes that God "maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire." (Heb. 1:7) Thus, for instance, the messenger of

the Lord smote the army of Sennacherib with death, as this lesson recounts that Pharaoh's army was smitten.

It matters little whether the Scriptures refer to the forces used as being the angel of the Lord, or whether they mean that the angel of the Lord had charge of and used the forces which operated. The effect would be the same in either case. God's power would be equally manifested, whether directly through the elements of nature or through the intermediary of a spirit being, commanding the forces of nature in the name and power of Jehovah.

There are valuable lessons for the Christian in connection with the manifestations of divine power on behalf of typical Israel. These lessons suggest that the same God is no less willing and no less able to deliver the spiritual Israelites from their bondage to sin and Satan, and is no less able to provide a way of escape, even through bloody seas of difficulties.

There is a lesson, also, for us in respect to the interpretation of God's Word. As we see it beginning more and more to open up unto us with clearness, simplicity, beauty, let it increase our faith in God and in the revelations which he has made through the prophets of old, as well as through the words of Jesus and the inspired apostles.

As God had already arranged Israel's affairs before they knew about their difficulties, and perceived that they were hemmed in on every side, so the same God foreknows all of our difficulties and has arrangements made for our relief and deliverance, and is merely waiting for us to appreciate the situation and to cry unto him in faith. "Before they call, I will answer." Another thought is, sometimes we come to the very end of all human possibilities. Then, and not till then, should we apply the words of Moses to ourselves: "Stand still, and see the salvation of Jehovah."

THE MANNA FROM HEAVEN

AUGUST 24.—Exodus 16:2-15.

"Jesus said unto them, I am the Bread of Life"—John 6:35.

Realizing their deliverance from bondage, and the divine power exercised in their behalf in the overthrow of the Egyptian army, the Israelites were joyful. Moses, their great leader, composed a poem of much force and beauty and of recognized high standard. The men chanted it after Moses; and the women, under the leadership of Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron, took timbrels, or tambourines, and joined in a refrain, or chorus, their bodies swaying and their feet moving rhythmically in what is described as a dance:

"Sing ye to the Lord [Jehovah];
For he hath triumphed gloriously."

Singing songs of praise constitutes one of the most interesting and most profitable methods of worship. But we may be sure that they are acceptable to God only as they come from the heart and truly represent its sentiments. We fear, alas, that many hymns, like many prayers, never go higher than the heads of the offerers; indeed, we have sometimes feared that careless, irreverent singing might really be resented by the Lord as profanity—taking his holy name in vain. If so, the results would be of course the very reverse of a blessing, and that in proportion as the singer comprehended the impiety of his course. "The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."

We do not mean by this that any unjust or cruel torments, future or present, would be the penalty, but we do believe that such a course reacts upon the irreverent heart to make it colder, more indifferent, and less susceptible to the influence of the divine message of grace. Ah! if all Christians sang with the spirit and with the understanding also, and if none others sang hymns, the earthly sounds might be more discordant than they are; but their heavenly echoes and fragrance would be the more acceptable to God.

BITTER WATERS, THEN AN OASIS

The journey toward the land of promise began. At length, fatigued and thirsty, they came to a fertile spot, where there was an abundance of water, but alas, it was bitter, or brackish! The disappointment was great. The song of reverence was forgotten; the mighty power of Jehovah in bringing them through the Red Sea was forgotten; even the taskmasters of Egypt were forgotten. The people murmured against Moses for bringing them away from the fertile fields of Egypt and its abundance of good water. They declared that it would have been better if they had remained in Egypt, or even if they had died there. They declared that Moses and Aaron had misled them into leaving the land of plenty, and had brought them into the wilderness, to die there of hunger and thirst.

The Lord's wisdom guided Moses to a certain kind of tree, which, put into the water, made it sweet and palatable.

Moses explained to the people that in murmuring against him they were really murmuring against God, for he was merely God's agent in the matter. A further journey for a season, and they were far from the bitter waters—at Elim, a delightful spot, where they rested and were refreshed.

The Scriptures explain that God had a special purpose and object in this leading of natural Israel. He was teaching them lessons which would be helpful to them, and, if rightly received, would prepare them, through faith and obedience, for Canaan. "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments, or no."—Deut. 8:2.

The lesson to spiritual Israel is a still more important one. If the natural Israelites needed heart development and faith as a preparation for the earthly Canaan, how much more do spiritual Israelites require for the heavenly Canaan, toward which they journey from the time they leave Egypt—the world, and its bondage to sin! Can we wonder, then, that God permits many trying experiences to come to spiritual Israel—trials of faith and of patience, "bitter waters"?

Any saint of God may have tears in the trying experiences of the journey in the narrow way, but none is excusable for murmuring. Rather, each should say with the Master, "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?" To those who approach the springs of bitterness with the proper faith in God as did Moses, the Lord makes known precious promises, which

"Steal the bitter from life's woes."

As the Israelites were led from the bitter waters to Elim and its rest and shade, so God's spiritual Israel are not tempted and tried above what they are able to bear. With every temptation the Lord provides a way of escape, when frequently he revives the souls of his saints by granting them seasons of refreshing and comfort, preparing them for their trials in the wilderness state of the present life.—1 Corinthians 10:11-13.

"IT IS WHAT?"—IT IS MANNA

When the Israelites murmured against God and Moses, his mouthpiece and servant, it was because of insufficient faith. Those who truly believed in the divine providences which had preserved them from the plagues of Egypt, and which had brought them out across the Red Sea, would reason assuredly that God would not leave them to starve in the wilderness. But the majority evidently were murmuring through a lack of faith.

And so it is today. As St. Paul declares, "All men have not faith." We do not blame them for this. Evidently con-

ditions of environment or heredity have very much to do with our possibilities along the line of faith. Some by birth, early training and larger experiences have therefore a great advantage over others, so far as the present age is concerned; for God has ordained that the message of the present time shall be for those who have the ear of faith. "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear." Whoever has an ear for God's message and can exercise faith has a great blessing, in the sense of an opportunity which others do not have—an opportunity of making his calling and election sure under the call of this Gospel age.

We thank God that his Word teaches of an age to come, wherein Messiah will bless with precious opportunities those who have not the ear to hear and a responsive heart in the present time. We thank God that his Word expressly declares that in that coming age, the Millennial age, all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped. Then will be fulfilled the Scripture that Jesus is the true Light which must eventually lighten every man that cometh into the world. (John 1:9) But the opportunities of the Millennial age will not make possible so high a blessing as the high calling of this age sets before whoever has the ears to hear and the eyes to see it.

In answer to the murmuring of the Israelites, God sent them that same night a great quantity of quail. If they had hungered for the flesh pots of Egypt, they should see that God was able to give them flesh in the wilderness. One of the accounts of this wonderful supply of quail has been found fault with by some agnostics who thought that it meant that the quails covered the entire ground to a depth of nearly five feet. The explanation is that quail, flying across the Gulf of Suez, in their weariness flew close to the ground—within about five feet—and thus were easily captured by the Israelites in great numbers.

God promised that on the following day the Israelites should have plenty of bread. In the morning the ground was covered with small particles, whitish in appearance, a little

larger than mustard seed and tasting like a honey wafer. This was to be their daily supply. It required gathering; and this gave them all employment, without which they would not have been happy. It required preparation. There was a certain amount apportioned to each individual.

A lesson of generosity went with the manna; for whatever portion was kept over to the following day corrupted. Nothing of the kind was known to the Israelites; and they asked, "What is it?" and this became its name—"What is it?"—or "that manna." The gathering of it helped them to remember the Sabbath also, for none fell on the Sabbath, but a double portion on the day preceding, and what was kept over that night did not corrupt.

THE BREAD FROM HEAVEN

Jesus reminded his followers of that manna given in the wilderness, and declared that it typified himself, the true Bread. As the Israelites would have perished without food, so the spiritual Israelites would not have sufficient strength for the journey without the heavenly food. Jesus gave himself the title of the truth. Whoever therefore eats of this Bread from heaven partakes of the truth. "Sanctify them through thy truth; Thy Word is truth." Only by partaking largely, regularly, daily, of our Lord, his merit and his gracious arrangements for us, can we become strong in him, and prosecute the journey faithfully and enter into the spiritual Canaan.

As every Israelite was required to gather manna for himself, so each Christian is required to gather and appropriate the truth. We must do our own part along spiritual lines, as well as along earthly lines. The graces of the holy Spirit cannot be expected to come to perfection without preparatory planting, pruning, cultivating. Some one has well said, "Rooming at a college does not make a scholar, nor occupying a pew in church make a Christian." To grow strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, we must feed upon him daily—we must appreciate and appropriate the merits of his sacrifice.

CONVENTION-TRAIN REPORT

Brother Dr. Jones, with his special train of conventioners, starting from Chicago, stopping at St. Louis and at Hot Springs, received the Editor most cordially at Hot Springs, Ark. The conventioners numbered 240 and represented thirty-four states. Some of them we had previously met, others we knew by correspondence; but almost without exception they were brethren in Christ and consecrated Bible Students. Nearly all of them paid their own way; while a few, we understand, have been financed by their friends or relatives in order to give them the spiritual opportunities of this convention tour, as well as physical rest.

From Hot Springs the party went south to Texas. The Editor saw them at the different meetings and greeted them there with others, and also had a nod or a word with some occasionally on the train. But his time was occupied with literary work, in which he was assisted by two brethren who are stenographers.

Dallas, Texas, June 8, was our next stop. Here, also, we had a hearty reception from the Bible Students' Class. The morning and evening services were for the Bible Students, and proved interesting. The Auditorium was well filled—capacity about 500. The afternoon service for the public at the Opera House was also well attended, notwithstanding hot weather and rain. Attendance 1,200, interest good, applications for more literature, 54.

San Antonio, Texas, June 9.—The entire morning was devoted to testimony, symposiums, etc. The Editor addressed the interested in the afternoon, to the number of about 500. In the evening his public address was heard by about 1,300, ninety-two of whom manifested interest and desired further reading matter. Altogether the special train conventioners had a happy day here, one long to be remembered, and their number was increased by two at this place. Thence we sped onward to—

El Paso, Texas, June 11.—There are very few Bible Students here. We trust that the number will be greatly increased shortly. The public attendance was estimated at 1,700, of whom 156 left their addresses requesting more reading matter along the lines of the subject discussed, which was, "BEYOND THE GRAVE."

At Tucson, Arizona, June 12, by special request of the local Board of Trade, our convention committee had arranged for us to stay over one day at this thriving little city. When the invitation was extended, it was with the expectation that the local ministers would give us the "glad hand"; but when

it was not forthcoming, and on the contrary, opposition was made, the business men advised us that they thought it unwise to have a public address. They did, however, treat us most cordially, and showed our entire party around the city in automobiles.

Meantime, also, the conventioners, by a distribution of literature, got the message all over the place; and the literature informed the public as to why the ministers were opposed; namely, because they feared the truth of the Bible coming in contact with the errors of their creeds. We have reason for believing that some good will come, having done our best. The results are with the Lord, and we left, well contented.

At Los Angeles, June 13, where a five-days' Convention of Bible Students had been arranged, the convention was already in session when our party arrived. The People's Temple was over-crowded, capacity about 1,000. The Editor spoke twice, once to the Bible Students, numbering 1,000, and once to the public in general. The audience of the public service was estimated at 4,000. Splendid attention was given, and 475 requests for further literature were handed in. The local class of Bible Students has been growing considerably within the last year. The old friends and the new gave our party a hearty welcome.

San Diego, California, June 14.—Here, as at Hot Springs, the ministers made an attack endeavoring to prevent our meeting; but here also the Lord raised up for us friends amongst the public, who reproved the ministers for their unchristian course and dark ages' methods. The Mayor and a company of business men received us cordially, and took us about their city in autocars. We appreciated their hospitality and cheerfully acknowledged that their city has fine prospects, among others one of the best harbors on the Pacific and their climate par excellence.

We had interesting meetings with the Bible Students here, and a fine public meeting, attendance at which was estimated at 2,000. There were 199 addresses handed in, expressing interest and desiring reading matter. We believe that some of the prejudice has been broken down. The public came out freely, notwithstanding an attack made by the ministers through a local newspaper. The Lord raised up a defender who answered the malicious slanders of the ministers, which were merely rehashes from the *Eagle*. This reply published in the same paper the next day, we trust offset the evil intended. Additionally, the train conventioners circulated freely the special issue of the Bible Students Monthly which explains

the attitude of the ministers, and which is circulated only in places where there are evidences of a concerted endeavor to prejudice the public.

Santa Ana, June 15, came next—a Sunday morning service. The principal Opera House here had been engaged for our use; but somebody had influence enough to have the building condemned as unsafe, although it had never previously been thought unsafe, even when crowded to the limit. The friends surmised that this was a strategic move on the part of the ministers to prevent our meeting—to prevent Bible Students from calling the attention of the public to the real teaching of God's Word. However, since the Lord was pleased to allow the meeting, the Bible Students were quite content, and took the next best auditorium available. It was crowded beyond its capacity—1,200—while an overflow meeting of several hundred Bible Students was held in another building. There were 200 addresses handed in, expressing interest and requesting literature.

Pasadena was reached the same afternoon. Its theater capacity was crowded, 1,300 being present, with splendid interest. Here 183 addresses for literature were handed in.

San Francisco was our next stop. Here a three-days' Convention was in progress. The train conventioners participated during the day of our stop, Monday, June 16. The Editor addressed the Bible Students in one semi-public service. Approximately, 700 were present. Then came the evening meeting for the public, with an estimated attendance of 4,000, and 408 requests for more literature.

Tuesday, June 17, was spent in journeying from San Francisco to Portland, Oregon. We had no opportunity for public service, but had the pleasure of meeting a goodly group of Bible Students at Ashland. The train remained there fifteen minutes. The friends were on the platform awaiting its arrival. They loaded us with flowers and good wishes. Some of their number journeyed with us to the next station, bidding us Godspeed. They sang to us and we to them, "God be with you till we meet again."

Portland, Oregon, June 18.—Here we found the Bible Students quite alert, and growing both in numbers and in spirituality. We had an enjoyable meeting with the Bible Students, exhorting them to love and loyalty, and held up before them the cross and the great reward promised to those who overcome. The attendance was approximately 500. Then came the evening service for the public. Notwithstanding a heavy rain storm, the audience numbered about 3,500 and gave good attention, 271 leaving their addresses, requesting further literature.

Tacoma, Washington, June 19.—More brethren, more fellowship, more encouragement, fresh manifestations of love and zeal, an excellent meeting with the interested, a splendidly attended public meeting—1,800; 275 gave in their addresses, as indicating interest and a desire for further literature.

Seattle, June 20.—The Seattle class of Bible Students appear to be making good progress, not only in numbers, but also in development of the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit. Here, also, we had a very enjoyable season with the friends, giving them one address. The attendance at the public address in the afternoon represented the capacity of the theater, including the stage—2,300. Requests for further literature from the interested numbered 283.

Victoria, B. C., June 21.—Here we had more good times with the Bible Students with an attendance of 500. Then came the evening service, with an estimated attendance of 1,000. The Bible Students gave place to the public, and assembled in another building, as an overflow meeting. The interested strangers to the number of 156 left their addresses, requesting further literature.

Vancouver, B. C., June 22.—We had a grand time here. The Spirit of the Lord operating in the Canadian mind gives blessed fruitage, similar to that found elsewhere. An all-day program had been arranged. We were met at the boat-landing and escorted to the place of meeting, where a public address of welcome was given. To this we responded, assuring the brethren of our appreciation of their cordial welcome and of our realization that by the same spirit all the Lord's people have been buried in the one body—the body of Christ, the "church of the first-borns," whose names "are written in heaven." Then came a testimony meeting with further addresses.

The afternoon service was for the public. The attendance was estimated at 4,500, but other hundreds of late-comers were turned away; for, owing to the construction of the building, the late-comers would have disturbed the others by reason of the noise of their shoes. The audience was especially fine and the attention excellent. Addresses to the number of 224 were handed in requesting further literature.

When it is remembered that the majority of the meetings here noted were held on week-days, the attendance surely indicated that the people had not lost their interest in the Bible and in religion, and that the falling off in the general church attendance is therefore properly chargeable to another cause. We believe that the decrease in church attendance, of which we hear so much, is chargeable to the fact that the public have lost their faith, as well they might, in the creeds of the dark ages. They are receiving no spiritual food. When the ministers preach to them along the lines of sociology, or astronomy, or science, the pews, as well educated and as well informed along these lines as are the pulpiteers, care little for the minister's dissertation.

Oh, that the ministers of today, instead of feeling angry against the truth and fighting it, would investigate it thoughtfully and prayerfully! Then indeed they would be a power in the earth, in this, our wonderful day, in which God is sending out his light and truth to be the guide of his people, to guide them to his holy hill—the kingdom of Messiah! What a power these ministers might be, if backed by the truth of God's Word!

How pitiable it seems that men so well equipped would be not only useless as respects the advancement of Christ's cause, but be really the leaders of the opposition thereto—ignorantly serving the prince of darkness! All the more, however, the truth must be spoken. The shackles of the creeds of error must be broken. The beauty of the Truth must be exhibited; for it is the power of God for the calling and electing and perfecting of the bride class to be the Lamb's wife.

But while we must oppose the error, and must uncover its very foundations in our efforts to "show forth the praises of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light," nevertheless, let us all the more speak the truth in love, without harshness, without personalities. Our dear brethren are deluded, deceived, not intentionally opposing the truth, we believe. How glad we shall be for the day when the great adversary, who deceived us all and is still deceiving so many, will be bound for a thousand years, as promised!—Rev. 20:1-3.

WORDS OF CAUTION

This may be as good an opportunity as any for a few words of caution. We are all in danger of going to extremes, and all should remember the Apostle's words, "Let your moderation be known unto all." At one place we found that a spirit of antagonism had been aroused by means of immoderate statements on the part of a few. They had suggested that Brother Russell and his writings are divinely inspired, as were the apostles of old. What a great mistake! No wonder such statements were resented! When asked if such were our opinion, we promptly assured the dear friends to the contrary.

The view we have always presented, and still hold, is that the Lord Jesus appointed only twelve apostles, St. Paul being the one to take Judas' place. The words of these would be so supervised by divine power that whatsoever they would declare binding on earth, the church would know would be bound in heaven, and whatsoever they would declare on earth to be loosed or not binding, they might know would not be obligatory in the sight of heaven. In other words, those twelve apostles were the special mouthpieces of the Lord to his church. They still speak to us. We need no others; we expect no others.

The most we have ever claimed for our own presentations, written or oral, is that they are in line with the words of the apostles, that they harmonize with them—that we keep so close to the words of the apostles and the words of our Lord that our message may be said to be their message, except in respect to the particular words used and the arrangement of them. In the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES we have classified the various presentations of Jesus, the apostles and prophets into different studies or topics; and this is what we meant when we declared in an old WATCH TOWER that, on this account, whoever reads the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES is really reading the Bible in an arranged form—topically. In no case have we ever presented anything as of ourself. In every instance we have fastened our presentations to the Scriptures on which they depend and rest.

Our claim has been, and is, that because we are living in the dawn of the new dispensation, it is the divine will that the mystery of God should now be finished, in the sense of reaching a completion, or unfolding. This we hold comes to us, not through special inspiration to speak or to write new things, but by the promised guidance of the holy Spirit, enlightening us and directing us to the Lord's Word, and assisting us to see the proper application of the same. The wonderful light of our day upon every subject undoubtedly inures to these ends.

Because it is due time, the Lord would send the light to his people, and as usual, would send it through some earthly instrumentality. If, in the divine providence, we have been used or shall be used of the Lord, it will be in making clear the sayings of inspiration already written, and not in making any new revelations or prophecies.

We take this opportunity, also, to guard the dear friends against the report that we are making any different presenta-

tions by letter than we have made in THE WATCH TOWER and the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. If any claim to have such letter, ask to see the letter, and refuse to receive as from me anything contradictory to the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES and THE WATCH TOWER. If we ever see it necessary to make changes, we will preferably do this in public print rather than in private letters or in private conversation. Let us stick to the written Word and THE WATCH TOWER publications.

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

SISTER SEIBERT TO HER FRIENDS

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:

Your recent letter of loving sympathy is received and deeply appreciated at this time. I want to assure you that your prayers on my behalf have been most wonderfully answered, and I am enjoying a peace of mind and heart which almost frightens me. I say to myself, "I did not know the Father loved me so!" His grace has been more than "sufficient," so that I have been enabled to comfort other bereaved ones in this sad experience.

I am counting my blessings every hour. I am so thankful my dear one was not taken ill three or four years ago, when I was so weak myself. Again I am so glad that he did not suffer any pain, which was very remarkable when we consider the nature of the disease, cancer. But this was my constant prayer, that, since he could not recover, the dear Lord would not permit him to suffer any more pain than was best for him and for me. I was more grateful than words can express because of the fact that we had the means to give my dear husband every comfort. I spared neither money nor skill nor science in order to do everything that could be done to cure him, as he was so anxious to get well. And lastly, but chiefly, I am so thankful that the dear Lord has seen fit to hide my dear one in the grave until "the time of his wrath be overpast," and that he has spared him the agony of witnessing my painful and probably ignominious death, if I prove faithful to present truth.

And thus, while I count my blessings, I do not sorrow as do others, but throughout these after-days I seem to hear a chime of silver bells every moment sweetly ringing the refrain,

"All that thou sendest me, in mercy given!"

The physicians would not tell my husband his real condition and it fell to my painful lot to refer to the matter on two occasions. I felt it was terrible to allow him to go down into death unconscious of his true condition. Yet, on the other hand, I realized I had witnessed to him daily, hourly almost, for nearly twenty years, without apparent effect. Nevertheless I determined to do what I could to help him. And therefore, about two hours before he died, when I knew he was failing rapidly, I said to him, "You are so tired, dear, wouldn't you like to sleep for a whole week? And how would you like to go to sleep and not waken until after the time of trouble is over?" He replied, "Oh, don't talk to me about death, I'm going to get well, I'm going to get well, I'm going to get well!" Then I said gently, "No, dearheart, you are not going to get well; the doctors knew it from the beginning but would not tell you, and now I must tell you. Can't you thank the Lord for his goodness in saving you from pain and letting you just go to sleep? Can't you say a little prayer? Say, Lord Jesus, into thy hand I commend my spirit?" No reply. "You are not afraid, are you, dear? Death is only a sleep. The Lord is going to let you sleep a little while and then in his due time he will call you to awake out of sleep, and the whole earth will be as the Garden of Eden, no more pain, no more tears, no more death." Still no reply. (Poor dear, perhaps he was too far gone, yet when I asked him if he knew me, he replied, "Of course, I know you, dear.")

I held both his dear hands while the cold death-stream crept higher and higher, and his breathing grew softer and softer until with a sigh he just fell asleep like a weary child upon its mother's breast. I caressed the beloved form and turning away, said, "Sleep well, dearheart, sleep well, no dreams disturb this sleep!"

He fell asleep on May 23, and on the 29th I laid him away amid the love and admiration and sorrow of the whole community, without a stain upon his reputation. I was alone, and had everything to arrange with respect to the undertaker and the services, but I tried to do everything as I believe he would have wished it done, without ostentation or extravagance, yet withal in good taste and of the best and most enduring quality. I have nothing to regret, I believe I have faithfully

discharged every earthly mortgage, and I trust the dear Lord will see fit to give me some further service for him and his during the "little while" that remains for the feet members of his body!

I wished to make the funeral services my final witness for the truth in this community, and requested that the Society send me our dear Bro. Woodworth to officiate. Services were held in the Presbyterian church at Mount Union, Pa., where Mr. Seibert's family had lived. The Presbyterian minister read Scriptures selected by Bro. Woodworth. Prayer was offered by the Methodist minister, to whose church my husband's family had belonged, and to which he left a bequest of \$500. Our dear Sisters Detwiler and Virginia Noble from "Bethel" then sang "Nearer my God to thee," my dear one's favorite hymn, and as I listened I could not help saying to myself, "Oh, that he might hear them, for he never heard that beautiful hymn so touchingly sung by human voice before!" (I used to sing it for him, but I am not a gifted singer.) Then our dear Bro. Woodworth followed with his discourse on two texts, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away," and "The ransomed of the Lord shall return," suggested by me. It was very impressive, and the audience of more than a thousand listened most attentively. I had arranged for a stenographer to take down as much as possible of what he said, and we have had it printed in the "Mount Union Times"; some of you have copies.

While the friends and audience were viewing the body, I had arranged for the two sisters to sing some sweet hymns very softly, so as to break that awful silence, that saddest moment of the whole service. They sang without the organ, "There is rest for the weary," and afterward they requested the organist to play softly our beautiful hymn, "Many sleep, but not forever." My dear one was a lover of peace, and "a peacemaker." To me one of the most touching incidents of the funeral was the presence of two editors, who had been sworn enemies when Mr. Seibert came to Orbisonia several years ago, walking side by side among the honorary pallbearers. He had brought them together in the bonds of peace and good-fellowship. Surely he will have little difficulty in walking up the grand "Highway of Holiness," especially with the assistance of so many dear truth friends who appreciated his nobility of heart!

I used to tell my husband that it was pride which kept him out of the truth, and his invariable reply was, "Why, what have I to be proud of but you!"

The floral offerings were the most lavish and beautiful ever seen in the town. At the cemetery dear Bro. Woodworth offered the most exquisite prayer I ever heard on such an occasion. Many persons referred to it afterwards, and also spoke favorably of the discourse. I trust that some good may have been done, some blind eyes opened, some weary hearts comforted that day. Both ministers asked Bro. Woodworth for some printed matter dealing with his subject. And a letter from the Methodist minister to me declared that my "manifest faith and trust had been a help to everybody." This greatly encouraged me. And further, I learned that all my acquaintances in the community expected that I would bear up differently from others, "because of my faith and my religion!" So I thanked the heavenly Father for his marvelous fulfillment of his promises, "As thy days thy strength shall be," and "My grace is sufficient for thee," and for this opportunity to show forth the power of the truth!

I cannot refrain from quoting here our dear Pastor's words to me. He writes, "You have my sincere sympathy. I know that you appreciated your husband very highly, as evidenced by your patient and continued devotion, not only in his illness, but at all times. I am glad that you have had the privilege of being with him to the last. I am confident that you can look forward to the future with good assurance that he was a noble man, and that God loves such characters, even as Jesus declared of the young Hebrew who said that he had kept the law to the best of his ability from his youth up. Of him we read, 'Jesus, beholding him, loved him.' We may

be sure that the Lord has a sympathetic love for all the members of the race who have a desire for righteousness. We are so glad that the time is hastening when all such will be brought to fullest opportunity for knowing the great Redeemer and experiencing the fullness of his restitution power."

Please continue to pray for me that I may be faithful in doing his will even until he shall say, "It is enough, come up higher."

With fervent Christian love, yours in our Redeemer and King,
 GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT.—Orbisonia, Pa.
 June 7, 1913.

HIDDEN PEARLS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:

Grace, mercy and peace be unto you. My heart daily overflows with joy and gratitude when I consider our Father's abundant blessings to us. Help is provided, through the appointed channel, for every step of the way.

How eagerly we welcomed the Resolve, as just the assistance we need! I have it written on a postcard—the vow on the other side—and keep it under my pillow, where I can read it as soon as I awaken. How it fortifies and helps one to be ready for every emergency! And what a grand beginning it makes to each momentous day—the wonderful, amazing days in which we live!

But I desire to tell you of the great help the little Question-books have been. I used them in study with another sister—all the class we have in our isolation. Some way I had looked upon them as for class study, and not for use in my private reading of ten pages a day in the STUDIES. But the Father opened my eyes to their full use.

I was unable to keep my mind fixed upon my reading as I desired; it seemed to me I was losing so much. A dear sister suggested to me, when I was out at a local convention, at Easter, to use the Questions. She was doing so with great profit. That was the key to the whole situation. There was the proper help provided, and I was not using it; hence not receiving the full blessing.

After that my thoughts were completely on my study, and I was not missing the point of each paragraph. I have been astonished to find what beauties of truth—pearls of great price—were hidden in the paragraphs, that refreshed, and strengthened and cleansed me daily. So now I am eager for other dear ones to share the blessings, and whenever our Father gives me the privilege (and of late he is graciously giving me many such privileges) of meeting with his dear people, I desire to testify as to the blessing that lies in those little books.

Words fail to express the joy of fellowship we experience through the columns of THE WATCH TOWER. God bless you!

With Christian love and greetings,

HOPE TATE.—Ont.

SEEKING TO SERVE

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY.

GENTLEMEN:

The writer had the pleasure of hearing Mr. Rutherford deliver a lecture in our city, Atlanta. Since then, I have bought of one of your agents a set of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. I am very much interested in them, as well as your work before the public, and will say, if you will furnish me with free literature of any kind on this great work, it will be a pleasure for me to place it in the homes as I visit the sick each day. I feel that you are doing a great work, and one that is much needed in every home. If I can help you in any way I am at your service. I am delighted with the lectures and will appreciate any literature you may care to send.

Very truly,

L. W. WIGGINS, M. D.—Ga.

FINDS HELP IN VOW

PASTOR C. T. RUSSELL, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:

I have often thought of writing you of my experience in connection with the special vow unto the Lord, but have refrained, because I knew that your time was so fully taken up. My first thought was, It is a needless addition for the consecrated, but there can be no harm in it. How surprised I was to find what a real help it proved to be! I recommend it to all.

While our opportunities for service in this present truth have been limited, we have had the pleasure of seeing some brought to rejoice in the truth, and to a full consecration in the truth.

I append a brief history of my search for truth:

Nineteen years ago, while associated with the Free Will Baptist people, through a study of the Scriptures, I was led to a complete consecration to the Lord, and while I kept my membership with them, there was such evident lack of con-

secration and the knowledge of God, that I refused to accept a pastoral work among them, working with them in evangelistic work, also with the Methodists, United Brethren, Presbyterians, and visiting among the Holiness people and the Christian Alliance people, being urged by each denomination to accept work, but not being able to do so.

I met one brother who had read the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES and believed them, but he had such a wrong conception of their real teaching, that I thought they did not contain what I was looking for. Then I met the Adventist people, and as they discredited the hell fire teaching, and taught the truth about the nature of man and the state of the dead, I associated myself with them, and accepted a work with them, feeling that there was no need to look further; that I should have to go through alone if I did. Here I first saw that God was doing his work on time; and the thought became fixed in my mind that every true doctrine must magnify the name of God, and reveal the beauties of his character. With this thought I soon found it impossible to give myself wholly to their teachings, and as the truth dawned on my mind and became clear to me that the church is the temple of God, I was convinced that the Adventist institution, with all other man-made ones, was Babylonish, and I sent my man-given credentials as a minister to those who had granted them.

This brought me to a very real sense of dependence on the Lord. I felt very much alone, but for him. But providentially a few days before this, a magazine copy of the DIVINE PLAN (WATCH TOWER form) was handed to me by a faithful colporteur sister. Because of the mental struggle I was undergoing in breaking previous ties, I paid no attention to it, but went and put it into the stove. Fortunately there was no fire in the stove, and after the step was taken that set me free, I went to the stove, pulled out the WATCH TOWER, and found that it was sent of God for just such a time.

I shall never be able to express my gratitude for the help the Lord has given me through the SCRIPTURE STUDIES, to you his servant; but the Lord will reward.

With much Christian love, your brother in Christ,

WM. H. BATTERSON.—Neb.

LUXURIOUS TRAVEL AND SACRIFICE

MY DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:

Before anything else let me thank you humbly and gratefully for your clear teaching on the Scriptures, and for giving it out to the world, at prices that almost any one can afford to pay.

I had practically left the English church, and had almost given up everything, when in 1908, some copies of PEOPLES PULPIT were put into my reluctant hand. Since then, through the six volumes of STUDIES, a little more light has been coming to me all the time, and I have been trying to lead a life more acceptable to our Lord. I have been almost alone in this neighborhood, as regards believers in present truth, but the members of the Victoria class have held out helping hands to me. Your teaching was so new to me, that for some time I was almost afraid to accept it, as we are warned about false teachers in the latter days. But all your teaching is based on the Bible and far from smoothing or widening the narrow way, it shows us we can expect nothing else on this side of the veil; far from teaching we can be Christians in name only, it points out that we must be Christlike in deed and thought; far from expecting popularity, we must recognize that we are a peculiar people, to be despised like our Master, and that our own individual responsibility increases, as he gives us light, and that we cannot attempt to go hand-in-hand with the world; therefore I now endeavor to lead others to read the STUDIES.

I want in all humility to ask you, How can we reconcile the description of the luxurious train, the hotel on wheels, and its places to lounge, its *chef de cuisine*, its corps of waiters, etc., with the example given us by Jesus of Nazareth? Is it not, dear brother, a pandering to the worldly spirit? It seems to me, that if Jesus had conducted such a tour, he would have chosen a clean emigrant car, containing necessities but not luxuries. How, too, can we reconcile the fact that when on earth he had no place to lay his head, with the fact that his chief earthly shepherd (whom he has honored as he has you, on account of your faithfulness and humility) should stay at the best hotels, instead of with his humble followers? On page 31, Vol. IV, you point out that some of the reformed churches did not succeed because they "have made many compromising overtures to the world for smaller favors." Is not this a repetition of the same kind of thing? I am told that the newspaper men arrange these things for you, but you remind us that responsibility rests on each individual. God can take care of his work in the future, as in the past, without depending on newspaper men. I cannot understand it all, brother, and I long for a few lines from you, who have helped

me so much hitherto. Vol. I, p. 199, "the consecrated, the transformed, in addition to the effort to subdue sin, must sacrifice the present good things." Vol. I, p. 203, "The transforming influences lead to present sacrifice and suffering."

Yours very gratefully,

THE EDITOR'S REPLY

DEAR SISTER:

Yours dated June 15, I am reading on the train. I thank you for its frank statements and queries.

It is true that there were no fine hotels in our Lord's day, true that there were no railroads, and that his locomotion was accomplished partly by little ships, partly on foot and partly on an ass. Were we to follow the Master's footsteps literally, the possibilities of the present harvest work would be much decreased. It is our thought that the harvest of the Jewish age was merely confined to the little country of Palestine; whereas the harvest of this age, world-wide, is to be accomplished in a similar length of time—forty years.

We believe that the wonderful conveniences of our day are preparations for the Millennium, and that the Lord is not displeased with us for using these in connection with his service. Quite to the contrary, it is rather our thought that God is providing these wonderful conveniences for the very purpose of facilitating the harvest work.

In this connection, we remember the Apostle's words which assure us that all things were given unto us richly to enjoy—to use, but not to abuse. We have an illustration of this in conjunction with our visit to India. The chief interest there appears to be in the western part, which has almost no railroad facilities. We were debating how we could procure some kind of conveyance to permit such a visit as we thought would be in the interests of the Lord's cause and not require too much time. Our queries were answered when we learned that just about ten days before our arrival, an automobile omnibus line had been established instead of a railroad.

As respects hotels: In the present instance I had no real need for a hotel because I could have stopped quite comfortably on the train. But the newspaper people handling my sermons are interested in making these somewhat of a spectacle, so that they can draw that much more attention to the sermons which they publish. In the world's estimation, a public man who is great or well thought of would be treated to the best that his friends possessed. From their standpoint, a very humble entertainment would be a low appreciation; and if his friends have a low estimation of him, the newspapers, representing the public, would size him up proportionately small, and his sermons would not be published.

The newspaper people surely deserve some consideration from me. It is estimated that my sermons weekly, through 2,000 papers, reach 15,000,000 readers. To accomplish these results by advertising would cost millions of dollars yearly. For the privilege of preaching the glorious Gospel of the love of God in Christ, I am not only willing to please the newspapers by going to good hotels and by long journeys to Panama, around the world, etc., but I am willing, also, to endure slanders and misrepresentations of jealous ministers who seek to prevent the publication of my sermons and the gathering of large audiences by slanderous misrepresentations of my character. Looking beyond the present, I am hoping and I am waiting for the Master's approval—"Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joys of thy Lord; thou hast been faithful over a few things."

We see no wrong in thus allowing the newspaper interest to have a say in respect to our earthly conditions when principle is not compromised. If they demanded that we should violate our conscience in respect to the publishing of the sermons, the case would be different. Conscience is not to be sold at any price. But when they arrange to give us additional comforts, we see no sin connected therewith. Rather, we remember that our Lord did not hesitate to wear a "seamless robe" in a time in which such a garment was considered extravagant, far beyond the means of the common people with whom he usually accompanied.

We remember, also, that while Jesus had no definite home of his own, one of his disciples, St. John, did have a home. So did St. Peter. We remember, also, that our Lord had a home whenever convenient at Bethany with Lazarus, Martha and Mary. We remember that they honored him with a sumptuous feast and with an alabaster box of ointment, very costly. We remember that when Judas found fault with the

extravagance, our Lord rebuked him and justified Mary. We remember that our Lord, on one occasion, at least, attended a wedding, and on another occasion was the guest of a rich Pharisee in one of the best homes of that time.

Respecting the luxurious train, with cooks, or chefs, attending to the food supplies: It is customary for newspaper people to use considerable latitude of language in their descriptions. It is not wrong that they call the cooks by the French name "chef"; and if anybody gets the thought that these cooks got fabulous sums for their services, as we hear that the chefs of the Vanderbilts, Goulds, etc., receive, he would be mistaken. The chefs, or cooks, on this train were brethren who availed themselves of the opportunity of a month's vacation, a convention tour, and meanwhile of the opportunity of serving the brethren on the train.

The train was described by the newspaper artist as "De luxe," and yet it was just such a train as everybody uses when travelling. Some of the cars were of the ordinary standard Pullman, and some of them Tourist, or cheaper sleeping cars. Of course, as your letter suggests, these friends might have gotten the use of a common box car cheaper, or they could have travelled afoot still cheaper. If they had gotten box cars and fitted them up for their use ever so crudely, with plain, wooden bunks and straw, the expense would have been nearly as great, if not quite as great, and the inconvenience much greater.

However, dear sister, I had nothing whatever to do with the making up of the train. I arranged for visits to the Bible Students of the Far West, whom I rarely have opportunity to see. My visit was in response to requests that I would come and hold public meetings. It was my intention to take the usual train service; but Brother Dr. Jones, learning of the tour, asked whether I would like to have company. I assured him that I would be glad of this.

Brother Dr. Jones then got into communication with the brethren, with the result that a train-load of friends journeyed with me. Some of them took the opportunity of meeting friends on the Western coast. All had the opportunity of fellowship with each other on the train, and at the various meetings served. They participated in the work, too. Two of them served as stenographers; Prof. Read freely gave of his professional ability in connection with the singing; and others served as ushers; while all did their best to cheer and encourage the local Bible Students in the various cities visited. Additionally, considerable volunteering with free literature was done.

We are in danger, dear sister, of getting a wrong view of what is meant by suffering with Christ. If we merely think of the Master's sufferings as those of weariness of the flesh, wearing sandals instead of shoes, and walking instead of riding, we shall be gradually led up to the same extremes of error which prevailed during the dark ages, and which to some extent still prevail amongst our Catholic brethren. Some of these attempt to have greater sufferings than Jesus had by going barefooted, or by whipping themselves tortuously and then wearing hair-cloth jackets to increase the pain, as the hair jags the sore flesh, causing it to fester. These, they think, are sufferings of Christ.

Gradually both Catholics and Protestants are seeing to the contrary. Jesus used the best roads and best means of his time. His sufferings were especially through the opposition of his foes in that he was despised and rejected of men. He was slandered, and "when he was reviled, reviled not again." He endured these things patiently for the truth's sake, and thus set us an example to walk in his steps, similarly enduring worldly contradictions, oppositions, slanders, for the sake of the brethren.

I trust, dear sister, that you will not stumble over the means which the Lord is using in this harvest time to promulgate the message of the hour, one to awaken his people and to guide them to better methods of Bible study. But even if you cannot see eye to eye with us, do not stumble yourself, but remember that to his own Master each servant stands or falls. Take all the blessings from our ministry that you can get, and leave the remainder of the matters which you cannot understand to God. In other words, let us more and more realize that God himself is guiding his own work; and that whatever blessing we may obtain we should be thankful to him for the same.

With much Christian love,

Your brother and servant in the Lord,

C. T. RUSSELL.

"My soul, be on thy guard;

Ten thousand foes arise;

The hosts of sin are pressing hard

To draw thee from the prize.

"Ne'er think the vict'ry won,

Nor once at ease sit down;

Thine arduous work will not be done,

Till thou hast gained thy crown."