

by putting them in prison and by making them pay so much money. Can this stop the people sinning? No; not at all! If these were the great Preacher's words and the words of our heavenly Father, and His punishment against the wicked, they would surely stop the people from sinning.

But we read in the Bible that the Deliverer shall come, and the kingdom of God shall come, and all nations shall know the way of our God; but the wicked will he destroy. Also we learn from our Master's lips the saying, "Learn of Me." People may remember that our Lord found the people of Israel doing wrong against the Word of God, and they were proud. But we never see a single line in the Bible saying that he took even one of the Jews to the Roman Governor, to be put in prison, etc.

All these things make us to be strong in faith that the harvest message is true. "Though it tarry, it will come." We had not believed it for a certain time, but when we believed we consecrated ourselves unto death.

I can only let you know how we are doing. We hold meetings twice a month, beginning on Friday and lasting over Sunday. Friday, Bible study; Saturday, discussion; Sunday, public meeting. Another week, the meeting on Friday is Question meeting; praise and testimony meeting on Saturday, and public meeting on Sunday. The number in attendance on Sunday, when we have general meeting, is 1,040, 385, 1,000, etc.; private meetings 36 to 40. But when we call all churches to one place, hundreds of brethren are present!

We thank God for his blessings which he has bestowed upon us. Furthermore, we thank him for showing us his secret and that he gives us wisdom to understand his Holy Scriptures. How glad we are to see these things being fulfilled before our eyes! In Nyassaland we see many things which have been preached in our churches, and what we are learning in the Volumes and WATCH TOWER—all these things are now being fulfilled. How glad we are to see that God has given us wisdom in preaching! How glad we are to see that our Lord is in the midst of us, leading us into his marvelous light! How glad we are that we "which in past times were not a people, are now the people of God"! And how glad we are to be dead to fleshly lusts, but to be alive to spiritual things! May God's blessing rest upon you!

Your younger brother in the service,

H. SIMON ACHIRWA.—Africa.

THE STRENGTHENING CORD

Dear Brother Russell:—

Greetings in the Lord! I feel constrained to write you concerning my recent experiences in the colporteur work, which

are unusual. Several days ago I canvassed a lady who is a trance-medium. She did not order the books. Presently I called on another, who bought the Spiritualism book. Still another I called upon in the same block, not knowing in either case that they were Spiritualists.

This one began by telling me she is preparing herself to be a writing and talking medium, and how, at times, "the forces" torment her day and night until she uses strong will-power to disperse them, saying, "Leave me now; I must have rest."

Asking the Lord's assistance, I proceeded to point out from Scripture the origin of these evil spirits—the fallen angels. Strange to say, she accepted it all very readily and asked questions re the same so eagerly! At this juncture peculiar noises were heard about the room; rappings, cracklings and faint chucklings. She noticed my nervousness and said in an assuring tone, "There they are now! It's the spirits, because you are talking about them." No doubt they were much displeased because of fear that she would get her eyes opened. Another medium now entered the room and I left.

How thankful to the Lord I am that he through you has provided the "strengthening cord"—the vow! As the consummation draws nearer we realize how necessary was this provision.

Much interest is now being aroused among the natural Israelites in this city through distribution of "Jewish Hopes and Restoration Prospects." Every family took one. They speak often of having read of Pastor Russell, of Brooklyn, in their Jewish papers. "He tells us of the restoration. Oh, we are so glad 'twill be soon!"

A dear brother bearing your name (Russell), although but three weeks reading the "Helping Hands," is rejoicing in the truth therein. He gives evidence of having made a consecration and is already showing his faith by his works, by helping the Lord's people. He expects soon to see the Photo-Drama of Creation in Boston. The Photo-Drama Scenario is stimulating interest to read the SCRIPTURE STUDIES. This brother desired me to tell you of his appreciation of the truth.

Even where few books are placed it gives the colporteurs great joy to be able to reach even one who is hungering for the Bread of Truth.

I wish to testify to the blessings the Lord in his goodness is sending me—especially through THE WATCH TOWER articles. The March 15th—"Are Ye Able?"—was so strengthening for the "feet-members"!

Praying that the Lord's richest blessings rest upon you to the very end,

Yours by his grace,

B. HAYNES.

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"THY JUDGMENTS ARE A MIGHTY DEEP!"

"The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men."—1 Corinthians 1:25.

The plan which God has adopted for dealing with sin and with sinners seems to the worldly mind, to worldly wisdom, to be a very foolish, a very unwise plan. The declarations of the Bible along this line do not appeal to such minds as reasonable. First of all, God created man perfect. Then he placed Adam under conditions where he was tempted and fell into sin. God then pronounced upon him a sentence of death, as He had forewarned him would be the result of disobedience. After thus sentencing man, Jehovah himself provided for a release from that death penalty by furnishing a Redeemer for the sinner at great cost. When he wished to proclaim to the world his provisions for their salvation from the curse, he sent forth preachers chosen from the race of sinners to tell the good tidings.

For nearly two thousand years these preachers have used their best efforts. As some of them would die, others would take their places. But with all the preaching that has been done only a very few have believed the message or given an attentive ear. Often have these imperfect messengers grown weary and faint. They have gone to the Lord with burdened hearts, telling him of the meager results that attended their labors. But the Lord has answered, "Continue to give forth the words which I have delivered to you; this is my will; it is just what I wish you to do." So they have toiled on, leaving the results with God.

But the world has shaken the unbelieving head. To them the proclaiming of such a message has seemed foolish, a waste of valuable time, an evidence of unsoundness of mind. Few have believed that it is of God—even if a God of love existed at all. Yet, as the Apostle tells us, "It pleased God by the

foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (1 Corinthians 1:21) He chose this method, which men denominate foolishness, to select a special class for a very special purpose, in connection with his great plan. Although from the human standpoint this appears a very small and weak beginning, as if God's work is almost a failure—if he purposes to save and uplift the world—yet when the plan of God shall have been brought to its glorious consummation, it will be seen by all to have been most wise, powerful and effective. No more shall it be

"The unbeliever's jest, the heathen's scorn."

God is not now choosing the great ones of earth, but chiefly the mean things, the humble and obscure, "that no flesh shall glory in his presence." He is choosing these as instruments to bless the remainder of the world.

LIFE A GREAT BOON EVEN NOW

The question has been asked: How is the love of God to be seen from the standpoint of a deliberate arrangement beforehand which, in its outworking, has involved so vast an amount of sin, suffering and death? In thinking of this question, one should first of all rid himself wholly of the erroneous thought that sin, suffering and dying are only preludes to an eternity of woe. Then we are to remember that God is not in any way our debtor. We are his debtors, even for our existence; he owes the race nothing.

Suppose that we could disabuse all minds of the idea of eternal torture or of a purgatory of suffering after death, and should then say to them, Consider, now: Would you prefer to live on for a few years more, or would you rather die at

once? Or, suppose we put it this way: Are you glad that you have an existence, or would you rather that you had never been born? We believe that the great majority would reply that they desire to live, that they prefer to live as long as possible. They do not wish to die, either today or tomorrow or next year; indeed they would never die if they could help it!

Those who feel that they would be glad to die, or who wish that they had never been born, are those who have had more than ordinarily evil and unhappy experiences; or else they are unbalanced in mind. Many have not so much money as they would like, not so pleasant surroundings and conditions as some have and as they would wish to have. Still life is sweet; and they hold on to it with as firm a grip as possible. Love of life is inherent in man, and has survived even the sorrowful experiences consequent on the fall.

WHY GOD PERMITS THE PRESENT REIGN OF SIN

But why does God permit things to be as they are? This has ever been one of the perplexing problems to the minds of those who have still sufficient faith to believe in the existence of a Supreme Creator. We do not know that we can make the matter any clearer or state it any more plainly than we have stated it in *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*, Volume I, in the chapter on "Why Evil Was Permitted." Putting ourselves in God's place, we are able to see that he must create man either without moral faculties, like the lower animals, or else with mental and moral faculties capable of appreciating the standards of right and wrong, of appreciating his Creator, with power to reason and to choose between good and evil—between obedience and disobedience to that Creator.

Having previously brought into existence the brute creation, God wished to create a nobler order of beings, creatures in his own image and likeness, on the earthly plane of life. He purposed to have a race of beings who were perfect like the angels, able to appreciate the same moral standards, the same principles of righteousness. The question might be asked: How could God so create these beings that they would not be in danger of sometimes falling into sin? Evidently it was not God's purpose so to create them. He desired that they should possess the quality of free moral agency, the power to exercise their own wills for either righteousness or unrighteousness.

At the time of the creation of man, Lucifer, Son of the Morning, began to cherish ambitious designs, disloyal to his Maker. He realized that a race on a lower plane of existence than himself might be induced to choose a course at variance with the expressed will of God—their Creator. Before man's creation God had foreseen that Lucifer would deflect from the path of obedience, would become a rebel against his righteous government, a great adversary, and that as the result evil would break forth later in his empire. He foresaw that through the influence of the rebellious Lucifer (thenceforth Satan—adversary, accuser, hater) man would become disobedient and fall from the condition of perfection in which he would be created.

Knowing this, and doing man no injustice, but creating him with full ability to resist temptation, God so arranged and timed the creation of man that he would be an object of attack by Satan, who would take advantage of the inexperience of father Adam and mother Eve and seek to capture the entire race of man. In other words, God purposed to permit this test to come to man, and knowing that Adam would fail in the testing and thus incur the penalty of death, he designed to make the experience of the race an object lesson to all his created intelligences, and at the same time to so overrule the matter that the human family would themselves eventually be delivered from the evil results of the fall and be greatly blessed, if they would profit by the lessons learned in their bitter experiences with sin, and would come back into harmony with righteousness.

TIME AN IMPORTANT FEATURE

God's infinite wisdom could not approve any as worthy of everlasting life who would not prove themselves to be in full accord with his divine law. The nature of sin is to propagate itself and to produce misery and degradation. With this knowledge God arranged in advance to let man have his own way. He foreknew that intelligent beings with liberty of choice and of will would eventually, if untaught and unrestricted, fall into sin, even though a penalty was attached to disobedience. He chose not to restrain Lucifer.

The plan of God is so comprehensive that it cannot be viewed and judged from the standpoint of a few years—not even of a thousand years or six thousand years. It must be viewed from the standpoint of eternity. It was arranged, not for the well-being of creatures who would live for a few years or a few centuries, but for those who would live throughout eternal ages. His plan must, therefore, be laid so broadly as to include all time and all beings created in his likeness, for his glory and their own eternal good.

We are not to suppose that Jehovah weeps in anguish because mankind are suffering and dying. He is a God of infinite love and sympathy; but from the beginning he knew that man would fall, and that he himself could overrule the entire matter for the ultimate blessing and instruction of men and angels—all his created intelligences; and he purposed so to do. We ourselves know that sin and death with all their direful effects have prevailed in the world for six thousand years. We also know that our God is at the helm, and that all things will be made to work out good in the end. We think of the flood as a terrible overthrow, because so many lives were lost. Yet the calamity would have been far greater if one half had been left to mourn for the others. It is claimed that men do not suffer very much when drowning—that death by this means is comparatively easy.

Six thousand years of sin, sorrow and death seem a long while for humanity to suffer. Yet the majority of the race have not lived beyond the age of twenty years. Perhaps one-half have not lived to the age of five. Very few have reached the age of one hundred years. We all have seasons of comparative comfort, blessing and enjoyment; even under present conditions, God has been very merciful. And from the view point of the glorious future, with its marvelous opportunities of blessing, its hope of eternal life for man, and its great lessons learned for all eternity by all of God's intelligent creatures, the reign of sin and death presents an altogether different aspect from what could otherwise be had.

In permitting the long reign of sin and its train of evils, God has been showing forth the principles of his government, that all may clearly discern in time what are the inevitable results of disobedience to their great Creator. We are sure that Adam and Eve were glad that God did not instantly carry out the sentence of death pronounced against them. We are sure that they were glad to be permitted to continue their existence for many years, even after they had been driven out of the Garden of Eden; and we believe that they had many experiences of more or less happiness, in spite of the tears, the pain and the sorrows that fell to their lot.

So when we view the entire history of the race of Adam, and perceive that all the experiences with sin, suffering and death are to be caused to outwork God's glorious purposes for the world, and are designed to prove a lasting lesson to all his intelligent creatures who now exist or ever will exist, we can see why he has permitted the reign of evil which to man has seemed so long. When we see, too, that God is now choosing a very select class, of very humble and obedient ones, to be used as agencies under his only begotten Son to recover and uplift to perfection and life everlasting all the human race who will accept the gracious provisions, we can understand why he has been pleased to call this class through the "foolishness of preaching," by very imperfect instruments. Thus he has manifested the humble ones, who will receive his message by any means which he is pleased to use, and who are glad to forsake sin and serve him.

A SAVIOR AND A GREAT ONE

God might have said, 'I will lift my curse from mankind and let them have another trial for life—an individual trial.' But even if this had been in harmony with God's Justice, it would not have sufficed alone. Mankind have long been floundering in the mire of sin. They were powerless to profit from any new trial granted them that would not include a Redeemer, a Savior, who was strong, not only to bring about the abrogation of the death sentence by a payment of their penalty, but also to deliver them from all the bonds of sin and death in their members. He must be a savior having power to bind the great adversary who has so long held the race of man in slavery and blindness. He must heal their wounds, open their blinded eyes and their deafened ears, and lift them up, up, into the light and liberty of the sons of God. Truly, man needs a mighty savior; and such, praise God, has been provided in his beloved Son!

As we trace the various steps of the marvelous plan of the ages, we perceive that to all who shall gain eternal life, on whatever plane of being, the path of humility is the path to glory. "He that exalteth himself shall be abased; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." None will be granted the inestimable blessing of life everlasting who are not thoroughly proven and found worthy under testing, who do not cheerfully humble themselves under the mighty hand of God. This principle applies to both human and spirit beings. Only those who gladly obey God, out of love for him and for his righteous laws, will be permitted to live beyond the harvest time of the Millennial age. All others shall utterly perish.

GOD'S GLORIOUS CHARACTER REVEALED

Then the holy in every sphere of life, in every part of the mighty universe of God, shall ascribe glory, honor and

praise to the almighty Creator and to his glorious Son throughout the ages of eternity. All will then see and acknowledge how marvelous was Jehovah's plan of redemption, how far beyond the power of fallen man to fathom. The majesty and glory of the divine character will stand revealed—his unswerving justice combined with infinite compassion, his glorious wis-

dom, his marvelous love, his mighty power. Then all will bow before him and adore!

“When all thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I'm lost
In wonder, love and praise!”

THE ANOINTED ONLY ARE COMMISSIONED TO PREACH

“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek: he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.”—Isaiah 61:1-3.

When the Prophet Isaiah uttered these words he spoke by the power of the holy Spirit. As the Apostle Peter tells us, “Holy men of old spake as they were moved of the holy Spirit.” Further, he says, “Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace which should come unto you, searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow; unto whom it was revealed, That not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel, with the holy Spirit sent down from heaven.”—2 Peter 1:21; 1 Peter 1:10-12.

In our text the word anointed is used in the sense of ordination. The high priests of Israel were successively anointed, or ordained, of God, the anointing oil representing the holy Spirit. Their kings were anointed to reign over the typical kingdom of God, the oil here also representing the holy Spirit. And so Christ, the great High Priest and King, was ordained of God by the anointing of the Spirit. It was not an anointing of men or by men.

In our Lord's case we know exactly when this prophecy was fulfilled. It was when he came to John at Jordan to be baptized, and there presented himself in sacrifice to God. The divine acceptance of this sacrifice was manifested by the impartation of the holy Spirit. John the Baptist saw the Spirit as a dove descending upon the Lord, the sign given to John, but seen by no one else. Jesus recognized that he had received a special anointing and unction from the Father—and others from that time perceived it. We are not to suppose that Jesus performed miracles before he was anointed, but this does not signify that he did not speak kind words and do kind acts before that time; for as a perfect man he possessed the Spirit of God in the full measure that a man in the image of God would possess it.

The fact that our Lord Jesus waited until he was thirty years of age before making his special consecration and receiving his ordination and commission to preach does not mean that his followers should wait until they are thirty before they begin to preach. It was necessary that Jesus should conform himself to the requirements of the law of Moses, given by God to the Jews; for Jesus as a man was a Jew, born under the law and subject, therefore, to its every feature. Full manhood under the law was not attained until the age of thirty. Our Lord came to give him life as a substitute for the forfeited life of Adam. Adam was a complete, perfect man, and our Lord must attain maturity as a perfect man before he could be a perfect substitute, a corresponding price.

THE “BODY” OF CHRIST NO PART OF THE RANSOM

With the disciples of the Lord Jesus during this Gospel age, the matter is quite different. Consecration is appropriate to whoever has the maturity of mind to realize clearly what he is doing—to realize the merit of Jesus' death and the significance of becoming a joint-sacrificer with him. The giving of the ransom is not shared by the followers of Christ. That was his work alone. But his disciples are permitted of God, in the opulence of his favor, to be counted in with Jesus as a part of the Sin-offering for the world, after his merit has been imputed to them and they have become members of his body, which gives to their offering a virtue which it could not otherwise possess. His merit is all-sufficient, and it is his merit that purchases the world, through his body, the church.

The anointing that was upon Christ Jesus continued with him throughout his earthly ministry—the fulness, or completeness, of God's favor rested upon his every word and act. God was manifest in his flesh; for he was the perfect human representation of all the qualities of Jehovah's glorious character. This was demonstrated in his resurrection from the dead after his sacrifice had been finished. Otherwise his work

of sacrifice would have been a failure and he would have remained in the congregation of the dead, and there would have been no benefit accruing to mankind from his death. Jesus was begotten of the holy Spirit and anointed at his baptism, and was born a completed spirit being of the very highest rank at his resurrection. No other being had ever been created on this plane of life. Hitherto Jehovah alone had possessed divine, incorruptible life.

OUR TEXT APPLIES TO THE ENTIRE CHRIST

We might have inferred without any direct statement that the words of the Prophet in our text apply to our Lord Jesus, but no doubt is left in our minds when we find that he himself quoted these words in his sermon in the synagogue at Nazareth, where he was brought up. He there stood up and read a part of this prophecy aloud. Then closing the book he said, “This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.” (Luke 4:16-21) He pointed out that he was the one referred to by the prophet. And we see the appropriateness of this application in every way.

But while the prophecy was primarily fulfilled in Jesus, and applied especially to him, we understand that it applies also to the members of Christ. These by becoming his body, thus became a part of himself. It is not because of any merit of their own.

This anointing that is on the church comes to us through Christ, flowing down from the head over all the body members, as shown in the type of the high priest of Israel, and as declared by the Psalmist. (Psalm 133:2) The Lord Jesus is our great Advocate with the Father, and in him alone have we any standing before God. We are thus received of the Father as spirit-begotten sons, even as was our Head. We are begotten of the Spirit, as was he.

Our vital union with our Lord as members of his body is also further shown by the Prophet Isaiah. Read carefully the 49th chapter, vs. 7-9, and their interpretation by the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:1, 2. This same Apostle further declares, “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.” Again, “The cup for which we bless God, is it not the participation of the blood of Christ? The loaf which we break, is it not the participation of the body of Christ? For we, the many, are one loaf and one body.” “Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.”—1 Corinthians 12:12; 10:16, 17; 12:27.

Again, the Apostle Paul declares of the church, “Whereunto he [God] called you by our gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.” How the deep sayings of the Savior become luminous in the light shed upon them by the apostles after their anointing of the Spirit! How the Master fulfilled to them his promise made just before his crucifixion! He said, as we remember, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when the Spirit of Truth is come, it shall guide you into all truth, for it shall not speak of itself; but whatsoever it shall hear, that shall it speak, and it will show you things to come.” (John 16:12, 13) These were the deep things of God, which only the spirit-begotten, spirit-taught children of God can understand.

We are, if faithful, to be made like him and share his exceeding glory. No wonder the Apostle exultingly declared, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.”—1 Corinthians 2:10.

APPLICATION OF OUR TEXT NOW

The Apostle John says that “the anointing which we have received of him abideth in us.” Again, “Hereby we know that we dwell in him [God] and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.” The Apostle Peter declares that Jesus

"having received of the Father the promise of the holy Spirit [for the church], hath shed forth this." (1 John 2:27; 4:13; Acts 2:33) It is from the Father and by the Son. This corroborates St. Paul's statement that all things are of the Father, and all things are by the Son. (1 Corinthians 8:6) The Scriptures tell us that we were begotten and anointed of God.

THE CHURCH'S FUTURE WORK

The anointing of the church is for a work yet future. The work of Christ and the church will not be accomplished in this present age. But God gives to those whom he has accepted opportunity to use in his service in the present life talents which he has entrusted to them. They are, as far as they are able, to bind up broken hearts and give "the oil of joy for mourning," and thus to help to allay the sufferings of others, especially of the Lord's household, though they are to assist any as they have suitable opportunity. But their special work in blessing and comforting the world will be in the kingdom. All mankind will be brought back from the tomb and will have all the blessed assistance of Messiah's reign. Everything evil will be uprooted, and everything good will be fostered and blessed.

While the anointed of God are on this side of the veil they are, as his ambassadors, to show forth his praises by telling others of the coming kingdom and the blessings then to be showered upon all, when the favors of the Lord shall be poured out upon all men. They are to tell that these blessings are both for those now living and for those who have gone down into the grave. God's great plan for the world is much broader and grander than once we thought. It is worthy of such a God as ours! Then let us tell to all who have an ear to hear, that the Lord is now pouring out his Spirit upon his servants and hand-maidens, and soon will pour it upon all flesh—all mankind.

We are instructed that this anointed class are to preach to "the meek." They are not to preach to the rebellious or the indifferent; these are to be dealt with by and by. The judgments of the Lord will forcibly break their hearts, and will effectively deal with all. The ambassadors of the Lord are to seek especially all those everywhere who manifest that they are feeling after the Lord, who are not satisfied with the things of the world, but who are longing for better, nobler things, who have and manifest a teachable disposition.

WHO MAY SPEAK IN THE LORD'S NAME

The text intimates that nobody is to speak in God's name except those who have been divinely commissioned to do so. Others may tell the story so far as they have learned it, but they are not authorized to speak in the name of the Lord. We are inclined to think that such do more harm than good, mixing error with truth; for those who do not understand the message have not been commissioned of the Lord to be his ambassadors. With God, human ordination counts for nothing. In human ordination, each denomination qualifies its own ministers. But the ordained ministers of God are servants of God and not of error. They are servants of his truth, not of the traditions of men.

What we have said as to speaking in the Lord's name does not mean that we are to carry the matter so far as to say that no one but those who see the real plan of God should even sing a hymn. In fact, the children of God are not to endeavor to hinder any from declaring the truth. Jesus gave a good illustration of this principle when his disciples told him that they had found some who were doing a work in his name and that they had forbidden them, because they did not follow him. The Lord replied, "Forbid them not." And so with us. We are not to interfere with any who are preaching the Gospel, even through strife, for they may do some good. Neither are we to endeavor to stop any who preach what they believe to be the Gospel. This is not our present commission, or any part of it. We are not as yet judges of the world; but we are to recognize the difference between such and those who are the true ambassadors, or ministers, of God.

God says of some who profess to be his mouthpieces, but whom he calls "wicked," "What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant into thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction, and eatest my words behind thee?" (Psalm 50:16, 17) Why should any undertake to give out the message of God when he has not recognized them by granting them the anointing of his holy Spirit, when they have not been taught of him, and are not doing his will? Let all others do whatever they like in co-operation with the truth, but only those who have been ordained of God in this one way should preach the Gospel. All who have received the divine commission should rejoice in their wonderful privilege of proclaiming the good tidings.

One of the features of our commission as ambassadors of the Lord is "to comfort all that mourn." The children of God, who have learned the true source of comfort, are the only ones properly qualified to be real comforters, in the Scriptural sense. These have had their own hearts bound up and healed by the Great Physician, and hence they know where to direct longing hearts who need the balm which only God can give. As the Apostle says: "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." (2 Corinthians 1:3, 4) So then, whether while still in the flesh or after we have come into our inheritance beyond the veil, we are to be comforters, to lift up those who are oppressed with sorrow and care, to bring to them "the oil of joy," the message of grace.

ON THE EVE OF THE DAY OF VENGEANCE

We are to be comforters at this particular time of "them that mourn in Zion." This is a work that the saints of today, who have been enlightened and blessed by the message of present truth, are eminently qualified to do. Many of us were mourners in Zion before this refreshing message came to us, mourning because of the confusion and worldliness and dearth that prevailed in the nominal systems wherein we were bound. But now we are free, and no more are "our harps hung upon the willows of Babylon." They are attuned to the harmonies of heaven, and we can now sing with the spirit and with the understanding the glorious "song of Moses and the Lamb." So let us be zealous in carrying this glad news to all the mourners in Zion not yet delivered, that they may join with us in this glad song.

The entire message as given in our text is now due to be proclaimed. We remember that on the occasion when our Lord read from the prophecy in the synagogue, he omitted the words, "and the day of vengeance of our God." The part of the prophecy was not due to be proclaimed; and Jesus could not have said of these words, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears"; for he was not to proclaim as then at hand the day of vengeance. So he read only the parts of the prophecy whose fulfilment was then due to begin.

But today the passage is due to be given as a whole. We are on the very eve of this great day of vengeance. We are now proclaiming in the words of the Prophet Zephaniah, "The great day of the Lord is near; it is near and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord; the mighty men shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasting and desolation, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities and against the high towers [strong and well intrenched governments]. And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord. And their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured with the fire of his jealousy."—Zephaniah 1:14-18.

A LESSON NEVER TO BE FORGOTTEN

In that day of terror and darkness men shall come to learn their need of a strong arm to deliver them. Their pride and self-sufficiency will be humbled into the dust. But out of that awful trouble mankind will come forth chastened and broken, and will be ready to be led out of the ruin and defeat of their own schemes and hopes, out of the darkness and chaos which in their ignorance and selfishness they precipitated upon themselves, out of the power of evil angels, into the light and blessing and deliverance then brought to them by the establishment of the kingdom of God's dear Son, long promised for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

It will be a lesson never to be forgotten. The sons of God, then exalted to the rulership of the kingdom, will begin their work of healing and blessing, of binding up the crushed and broken hearts of men. Their own experience in the present life will have taught them how to sympathize with the poor, sick world; and they will be able to pour into humanity's wounds the blessed balm of Gilead, "to give beauty for ashes," to wipe away all tears, and to lead all who will step by step up the grand highway of holiness then cast up for the people. "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." (Isaiah 35:10) Only the incorrigible shall again have pronounced upon them the penalty of death—the second death, utter destruction. "These shall go away into everlasting cutting off, but the righteous into life eternal."—Matthew 25:46.

THE BLESSING OF THE "CUP OF SALVATION"

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now, in the presence of all his people."—Psalm 116:12-14.

To Spiritual Israel these words have a peculiar significance which they could not have had to the Prophet David. Nevertheless, we would suppose that the Prophet had to a considerable degree the proper thought as to the sentiment of the words. King David no doubt felt an appreciation of God's goodness. His psalms show us that he had a very appreciative heart, grateful for the blessings that came to him from the Lord. Properly enough his heart cried out: "What shall I render unto the Lord?" What return can I make for all his loving kindness?"

David knew of God's promise to Abraham; he knew that God would sometime bless all the families of the earth, and that this blessing would come through the seed of Abraham. The children of Israel knew that they were Abraham's seed. King David was one of these, and he felt that in some way he would be identified with this promise. The matter was more or less vague to him; but, nevertheless, Abraham's seed was to bless the world.

In proposing to "take the cup of salvation," we think the Psalmist had in mind that whatever experiences the Lord might consider necessary for him he would accept; for he must have a share in that salvation. He would continue to call upon the Lord that he might have such a share; he would pay his vows unto the Lord "in the presence of all his people." He had made solemn vows, and he would fulfill them—he would consider this a privilege; he would delight in doing God's will.

DEEPER SIGNIFICANCE TO SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

To the Christian, however, all this has a much deeper significance. Beginning with our Lord Jesus, these words have a special meaning to each of the sons of God called to joint-heirship with the great Head of the church. Having been begotten of the holy Spirit and received into sonship, these wish to make a special return for all God's mercies. These have the actual forgiveness of their sins through Jesus, as David did not. His sins were only typically covered; and if he could say: "What shall I render?" surely much more should we say: "What shall I render unto the Lord?"

The Apostle Paul exhorts us: "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable unto God—your reasonable service." This is what we gladly render, then—our bodies as living sacrifices. In every truly noble heart gratitude is the responsive chord to kindness and love; and no harmony is sweeter or more inspiring to noble deeds and lofty purposes. God would have his children cultivate for their own sake, as well as for the sake of others, all the graces of true nobility and moral excellence. It is therefore most fitting that we should note every deed of love and kindness toward us, and be careful to return the gratitude and appreciation due. How often does love go unrequited because selfishness or thoughtlessness crowds out the nobler instincts of the soul!

While human love and acts of kindness often draw largely upon us for the exercise of this grace of gratitude, appreciation, how much more does the constant loving kindness and tender mercy of our heavenly Father thus fittingly draw upon our inmost being to respond in grateful acknowledgment and praise! To him we are indebted for every good that we possess. What this implies only those can know who have been brought by his love into the secret place of the Most High, and made to feast upon the "finest of the wheat," the wealth of our Father's storehouse. We are the special objects of his grace.

"HIS LOVING KINDNESS, OH, HOW GREAT!"

And who of us cannot trace a long line of special providences on our behalf? Who of us as we take a mental retrospect of our lives cannot exclaim with the poet:

"Looking back I praise the way
God has led me day by day!"

How wonderfully the Lord has guided his people! His children have ever been his constant care. No good thing hath he withheld from them, and all things have been made to work together for their good if they obeyed him. Who that has trusted the Lord through many years, through sunshine and shadow, through smiles and tears, by still waters and through storm and tempest, has not proved the verity of his precious promises and his abiding faithfulness! Surely, "not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you!" (Joshua 23:14) In the smallest and in the greatest affairs of our lives he has ever watched for our interests. Every cloud has had a golden lining!

What, then, shall we render unto the Lord for all his benefits? What have we, indeed, that we have not received from him? Nothing! As a tender parent loves to see his child appreciatively accept his favors, so does our heavenly Father regard our attitude toward him, and our manifestation of appreciation of His favors and love toward us. His unspeakable gifts to us were purchased at a great cost to his heart. Then we will thankfully take the cup of salvation, through faith in our Redeemer, and pay our vows unto the Lord. We will drink this cup with our dear Master—this cup of suffering and of joy. "We will trust and not be afraid."

The Father has made a special provision for those who have made a full surrender of themselves to him. The experiences which he has arranged for them constitute "the cup of salvation." And in accepting this cup from the Lord, we are accepting all the experiences that come to us in his providence, whatever they may be—joy or sorrow, pain or pleasure or anything. As Jesus exclaimed: "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?" so should this be the language of our hearts. It had in type been foretold of our Lord that he should be lifted up, even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. He knew that he was to be the great antitypical Sin-offering; that he was to be "made sin" for fallen man. Yet this cup that the Father had poured for him he declared himself very willing to drink. And this is the cup which he has given to us.

Our Savior said to his disciples who desired to sit next to him in the kingdom: "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?" He himself continued to drink of that cup until the end—he drank the dregs of the cup. And so it will be with his followers. We are to drink of this same cup. It is our individual cup, and yet it is his cup. If we be truly loyal we will accept our share of the cup thankfully, gladly. And we know that as we drink of it he will be with us; we shall not be alone. He supervises the experiences of each of his members; and with every temptation and trial he will provide some way to escape, if the trial threatens to become too severe.

THE CUP OF JOY IN THE KINGDOM

On the occasion of the institution of the Memorial of his death, the Master in his conversation with the apostles said: "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." (Matthew 26:29) Our Lord was here contrasting two great days—the day of suffering and the day of glory. This Gospel age has been the day of suffering. The Millennial age will be the day of glory, and is especially spoken of as "the day of Christ."

The fruit of the vine, the literal cup, represents two thoughts. The cup of wine is produced at the cost of the life of the grape. The grape loses its own individuality. The juice is pressed out, and thus the fruit of the vine is made ready for use. The cup of wine—the juice of the grape—represents, however, not only the crushing of the grape, but also the exhilaration that comes as the result. So in our drinking of this figurative cup. To us it symbolizes our Savior's sufferings and death, and our own participation with him in these sufferings. But wine also represents joy, gladness, and is thus used in the Scriptures. So in the sense in which the Lord used the words "fruit of the vine," quoted in the preceding paragraph, the cup represented the joys of the kingdom.

In the earthly experiences of our Lord Jesus the Father marked out for him a certain specific course. This course constituted his cup of suffering and death. But the Father promised him that after He had drunk this cup faithfully, He should be given a different cup, a different experience—glory, honor and immortality. And then the Savior was authorized by the Father to make the same proposition to those who might desire to become his followers—that if they would suffer with him, would drink his cup of death with him, then they should participate with him in his future cup of joy.

Our cup is a cup of joy and also a cup of bitterness. But when we are called upon to drink a bitter draft, let us remember him who bravely and faithfully partook of this bitterness, rejoicing to do the Father's will; and let us take courage, and likewise rejoice that we are accounted worthy to share this cup with our beloved Lord. And as he who was perfect needed strength and help divine in connection with his experiences in the drinking of the cup, as he sought the Father in earnest prayer for the needed assistance, so must we do. We should also be continually on our guard lest we enter into

temptation, lest we look away from him from whom alone cometh our help.

"I will pay my vows unto the Lord now," said the Psalmist. And "now is the acceptable time—now is the day of salvation"—for the church. Now is the time sacrifices are to be offered—not by and by. The Lord has so arranged that this vow which we take upon ourselves, this covenant of sacrifice, must be fulfilled by us. The flesh which we consecrate must be consumed. If we seek to withdraw the sacrifice from the altar, we shall be dealt with in such a manner as to destroy the flesh; else we ourselves shall be destroyed. If we faithfully drink of the cup which the Father has prepared for us, we shall afterward receive the blessings which he has promised to those who thus drink. Therefore, now, in the present life, we drink of this cup he has given us; for unless we do this now, we shall have no share in the kingdom blessings in the life to come.

In our Lord's case, literal crucifixion was necessary. He must bear the fullest measure of the Law's demand; he must bear the penalty of its every violation, even as in the case of the vilest criminal under the law; otherwise he could not have redeemed every Jew. He must bear the curse of the law—he must hang on a tree. But in our experiences, the cross will not be a literal cross of wood; the nails will not be literal nails; but bitter words and slander and misrepresentation will surely be our portion—and perhaps physical violence in some form to some of the last members of the body. We do not know.

BY WAY OF THE CROSS

"Whosoever will save his life shall lose it." We are all to pass through the trying experiences represented by the wine-press. We are to lay down our lives in the divine service. We are to submit ourselves to the crushing experiences, to be obliterated as individuals, in the human sense, and to become new creatures. "If we suffer [with him], we shall also reign with him"—not otherwise. So we joyfully accept the invitation to drink of his cup. And not until the cup has been drained to the last shall we receive the other cup—the cup of kingdom joys. While our Lord had a great blessing in the obedience which he rendered to the Father, yet it was a trying time for him down to the last moment, when he cried, "It is finished." And so with the church. We must drink all of the cup; none of the contents is to be left. We must endure all of the experiences.

All the sufferings of Christ will be complete when the body of Christ shall have finished its course. The new cup of joy was given our Lord when he was received up into glory. Then all the angels of God worshiped him. Soon our cup of joy will be given to us. No doubt it was a glorious time when the sleeping saints were awakening in the spring of 1878, and entered into their reward and received the cup of blessing. And one by one, those who were alive and remained at the coming of the Master are being gathered home. Undoubtedly we shall all partake of this joy with them soon,

DAY BY DAY, HOUR BY HOUR

"God broke our years to hours and days
That, hour by hour and day by day,
Just going on a little way,
We might be able all along
To keep quite strong.
Should all the weight of life

Be laid across our shoulders, and the future, rife
With woe and struggle, meet us face to face

At just one place,
We could not go.
Our feet would stop; and so
God lays a little on us every day.
And never, I believe, on all the way
Will burdens bear so deep,
Or pathway lie so threatening and so steep,
But we can go, if by God's power
We only bear the burden of the hour."

THE CHRISTIAN'S TOWER OF STRENGTH

"The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."—Hebrews 13:6.

The Christian's position in the world is a peculiar one. None others can afford to be so courageous and independent as he. Yet the true child of God is not self-sufficient nor independent of any outside help. He is exhorted in the Word of the Lord to be not boastful, but humble-minded, realizing his powerlessness of himself and his need of God. Indeed, unless he is humble-minded he cannot be pleasing to the Lord. But at the same time he is to be full of courage and confidence. No power in the universe is able to cope with our God; and he has declared that he is the support and shield of his children. He is the strong tower of those who put their trust in him.

If we abide in Christ and his Word abides in us, he will be our deliverer in six troubles, and in the seventh he will not forsake us—because we have been called of God, because we have responded to that call, because we are seeking to glorify

if we are faithful. We believe the fulness of joy will not be reached until all the members of Christ are with him beyond the veil. Then we shall share his throne and partake of his glory. Then with our beloved Lord we shall drink of the "new wine" in the kingdom; for the promise is to all his faithful saints.

"YE ARE MY WITNESSES, SAITH JEHOVAH"

The concluding statement of the Psalmist as given in our text is that he would pay his vows "in the presence of all his [God's] people." It is not enough that we shall be loyal in our hearts; but the Lord desires a public confession, a witness before men. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:10) And all the witnesses for the truth must be martyrs for the truth. They must, in other words, be willing to suffer for it. And so it will be to a large extent with those who are faithfully, courageously, holding up the banner of truth. They will be targets for the adversary.

Our Master said that whoever would not confess him before men, he would not confess before the Father and before the holy angels. Only those who are thoroughly loyal are to be of this very select company of which our Lord is the head, and which is soon now to be gathered into the heavenly garner.

Then let us appreciate more and more this "cup of blessing" which we are privileged to drink with our blessed Master; and let us "call upon the name of the Lord" for grace to help in every time of need. We need him daily, hourly, momentarily. And we may come to the throne of grace at any time in the name of our great Advocate.

Our Father's ear is ever open to the cry of his children. They are as dear to him "as the apple of his eye." They "are graven upon the palms of his hands." "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you," is his promise to his own. All that we can render will be at best very, very little in return for all his bounties, for all his matchless grace toward us. But the measure of love and zeal that accompanies our little all will indicate the measure of our gratitude to our great Redeemer.

"What shall I render, Lord, to thee?

Thy love surpasses all my thought!

What can a fitting tribute be

To him who my poor life hath bought?

"Who sought me in my low estate,

And raised me up to heights divine!

What words can fitly sound thy praise,

Or thought encompass love like thine?

"What shall I render, Lord, to thee?

My heart, my strength, my life, I bring!

My hands, my voice, in service glad,

To thee, my Savior and my King!"

him in our bodies. Hence we need not fear what any man can do unto us. The Apostle Paul, who exhorts us to courage and confident trust in God, was a noble example of courageous faith. He tells us why we have such abundant reason for assurance of faith and absence of fear of man. He says, "Let your conversation [conduct, manner of life] be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

TRUE FAITH NOT PRESUMPTION

We should not say, "The Lord is my helper, and therefore he will not suffer my house to burn, nor burglars to break in and steal my belongings. I will not lock my doors at night; for the Lord is watching over me and mine." This would not be the spirit of a sound mind. It would not be true faith,

but presumption. We should take all reasonable precautions to prevent losses of such kinds. The Lord expects us to do all in our power for our own protection, and not expect him to work unnecessary miracles to protect us from our own carelessness and inefficiency. Under such circumstances he might allow us to become involved in difficulty and loss, and thus to learn a needed lesson. We are stewards of whatever the Lord has entrusted to us, and he expects us to exercise care in regard to whatever is properly under our care but belonging to him. We should have buckets and water at hand so as to be ready in case of fire. We should have proper fastenings upon our doors and our windows. When our own duty is done, we are to leave ourselves fully in the Lord's hands, knowing that all will be well with us.

If the Lord permits seeming calamity to come, we may rest assured that it will work out our good, if we are properly exercised by the experience. After having done our part, we should trust all consequences to him, not doubting that he will care for us in his own best way. The Lord will give us whatever help along temporal lines he sees is for the highest interests of the new creature, if we do not remove ourselves from his keeping and seek to manage our own interests. Even in the event of such a mistake, if we come to see where we have been wilful and have leaned to our own understanding and renew full allegiance to the Lord, the difficulties in which we have become involved may prove to be a real blessing in opening our eyes to our wrong course, in showing us our own insufficiency to guide ourselves, and in bringing us wholly back to God.

"THAT WICKED ONE TOUCHETH HIM NOT"

Our highest interests, our real interests, are matters of our Father's constant care. If we keep very near to the Lord, we are protected from the power of the fallen angels, who would, if permitted, bring about our ensnarement and overthrow. They cannot really harm us if we are watching and keeping our garments white. Only a lack of faithfulness would subject us to their power to any extent so far as our new creature interests are concerned. They can neither harm our bodies in any way nor cause any violence to us, unless the Lord permits it for our highest good—perhaps for our deliverance and exaltation, as in the case of our Master.

Let us, then, keep ourselves, that "that wicked one touch us not." We are subject to various attacks by the deluded servants of the powers of darkness. There may be attacks upon our good name, our reputation, our bodies, or what not, with more or less legality. We are to a considerable extent subject to man, through "the powers that be." Yet our bitterest enemies are powerless to touch us, unless permitted by the Lord. And we cannot be touched by the great adversary, if we remain true to our covenant—true to the vows we have

taken to the Lord. The adversary can never touch our real selves as new creatures save by our own unfaithfulness.

WE WILL WORSHIP OUR GOD ALONE

It may be the will of God to permit us to suffer, just as he permitted John the Baptist to be imprisoned and finally beheaded, just as he permitted Jesus to be arrested and crucified, and he has permitted many of his saints in the past to be maltreated or killed. But we need not fear what men may do unto us, knowing that our God, whose we are and whom we serve, will be with us constantly, and will cause all things to work out his own glorious purposes for us and in us.

We would, of course, be glad to please men, if this were possible. But wherever it is a question of pleasing God or pleasing man, we will say, as did the three young Hebrews to the king of Babylon: "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us. . . . But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." We will not do anything contrary to the divine will, to the command of Jehovah. We will worship our God alone!"

When the Jewish Council (Acts 4:13-20) commanded the Apostles Peter and John to speak no more in the name of Jesus, their reply was: "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye; for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." When Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea, said to our Lord on the night of his arrest and trial, "Knowest thou that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?" Jesus answered: "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." So it is with all the footstep followers of the Master. God's grace will be sufficient. Man is powerless to harm a hair of our heads, unless it is permitted of our Father in heaven for his glory and our own highest welfare.

COURAGE BORN OF FAITH

The world has often wondered at the calmness of the Lord's humble little ones under circumstances which would cause the stoutest heart to quail. But to follow the course in life which will glorify our God and magnify his grace, to be able to meet wisely and courageously the trials and difficulties as they come to us as Christians, representatives of the King of heaven, and to meet them in the spirit of rejoicing, counting our tribulations all joy, it is necessary that our hearts be in attune with the Lord, that we have no will but his, and that the fear of man, which bringeth a snare, shall be overcome. We cannot accomplish this in our own strength, but in the strength of God alone. We are instructed to fear Jehovah, and not to fear a weak mortal. The righteous are as bold as a lion, as gentle as a dove, as meek as a lamb. This peculiar combination of boldness, gentleness and meekness should characterize every Christian.

MARY'S SWEET PERFUME

OCTOBER 4.—Mark 14:1-11.

"She hath done what she could."—Verse 8.

The last five days of Jesus' ministry are full of interest. The incident especially marking our lesson occurred at the close of the Jewish Sabbath day just preceding our Lord's crucifixion. Jesus and his disciples had come to the Passover feast, he telling them that he would there be crucified, but they thinking that he was speaking in some kind of figurative language. Indeed, at no time during Jesus' ministry did his crucifixion seem to be less likely than when it occurred. His preaching and the preaching of his disciples, first the twelve and afterward the seventy, had awakened considerable interest throughout all Jewry—especially in Galilee.

Great throngs of people were at Jerusalem to celebrate this feast, which would last a week. Thousands of them had heard of Jesus; and many of them had been recipients of his mercy in the healing of their diseases. Just a short time before, a considerable number had discussed the propriety of proclaiming Jesus king. Indeed, on the very next day after the incident of this lesson, the multitude, some following and some preceding him while he rode upon the ass, had acclaimed him king. They had cried out, "Hosanna in the highest to the Son of David, who cometh in the name of Jehovah!"

But the Master knew that the masses would be only as children in the hands of the great teachers of the time. He knew that there was a murderous hatred against him amongst the chief priests, the Scribes and the Pharisees. True, it is written that they hated him without a cause; that is to say, without a just cause (John 15:25); but they had cause enough to hate him, from their own viewpoint.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE RELIGIOUS TEACHERS

Although the Jewish nation had lost its liberty long be-

fore and had no prospect of ever winning it back, nevertheless there had never been a time since the days of Solomon when their political prospects looked so favorable. The Roman emperors had manifested their willingness to co-operate with these very priests, scribes and religious leaders. The emperors wished merely to rule, and realized that they could exercise more influence through these religious leaders than in any other way.

Thus the great religious teachers felt themselves sponsors for the people. They perceived that their hold over the more ignorant Jews was being impaired by the teachings of Jesus. They felt so satisfied with themselves as claimed representatives of God and as intermediaries with the Roman government that they did not think it worth while to make inquiry respecting Jesus and his teachings. Indeed, from their viewpoint, everything was going along reasonably well. They could wish for nothing better than that their plans might not be interfered with.

Many of them had lost all faith in God and in a future life. Others, retaining faith in God and his promised kingdom, thought that affiliation with the Roman empire would be the best way of strengthening their nation and preparing it for the Messianic glories. From this viewpoint, Jesus was a disturber of the peace. He did not belong to their clique. His manner, no less than his teachings, reproved them and tended to break all their influence with the people.

The religious leaders had heard that Jesus was coming to the feast. Our lesson tells us that they discussed how he could be wisely dealt with, killed, gotten rid of in any way. They seem to have been unanimous in believing that his de-

struction would be for the good of the Lord's cause, as they misunderstood that cause. Another Scripture tells us that Caiaphas, the chief priest, had declared that it was expedient that one man should perish rather than that the nation should perish. (John 11:49-52) They fancied that the teachings of Jesus, if allowed to proceed, would certainly awaken the people to a faith in the Messianic kingdom. They thought of Jesus as an impostor, but feared that His teachings would incite some kind of fanatical uprising.

The religious leaders had murder in their hearts. It was merely a question of how they could accomplish the murder and deceive the people, so as not to provoke those who had begun to exercise faith in Jesus. Their conclusion was that the best time would be an unfavorable one; for he would be surrounded by the multitude, some of whom thought him a great prophet, others of whom considered him to be the Messiah. Such was their attitude of mind when Judas went to them privately, suggesting that he would be in touch with the movements of Jesus and that for a certain amount of money he would inform them of the most suitable time for making Jesus a prisoner—a time when the multitude would not be with him. His plan was finally decided upon and carried out.

THE FEAST—THE ANOINTING

Jesus and his disciples were the honored guests of that Lazarus whom Jesus awakened after he had been dead three days. It was at the home of Simon the leper, who probably was dead. Jesus was the guest of honor, his disciples sharing with him. Martha and Mary, with Lazarus, were hostesses. The supper had progressed when Mary entered with a vial of very expensive perfume, the contents of which she poured upon the head of Jesus and, according to another account, subsequently poured a portion of the same perfume upon his feet.

The house was filled with the perfume; Jesus was honored. Then came a voice of murmuring—"Why this waste?" St. John tells us that the leader of the murmurers was Judas, and that evidently several were influenced by his speech. Judas posed as the friend of the poor, intimating that his regrets were not selfish or personal, but that he thought what good might have been done to others.

The Apostles afterward learned that this speech was hypocritical. At the time Jesus understood the anger of Judas, which led him openly to insult one of the hostesses of the occasion. St. John tells us the anger of Judas was because he had failed to get this money himself. He was the treasurer of the little company of disciples; he carried the money-bag; and, as they afterward came to know, he was a thief, who privately was laying by for himself. (John 12:6) And Judas is probably not the only person who has plead for the poor and at the same time sought to divert funds to himself.

THE MEASURE OF MARY'S DEVOTION

The statement of Judas that the perfume was worth three

hundred pence is probably not an extreme valuation. Three hundred pence would be about six dollars. At a time when the silver penny, worth sixteen cents, represented a day's labor, three hundred pence would practically represent the labor of a year. Sixteen dollars per ounce, sometimes more, has been paid for the attar of rose; and history tells us of fabulous prices paid for perfumes in the past.

Today perfumes can be made and sold at trifling cost, in comparison with the past. And yet the ancients were passionately fond of perfumes; and the liberal use of them, as in the case before us, marked a deep respect, yea, reverence. Mary doubtless felt that her very highly esteemed friend Jesus, who had brought her brother back from the tomb, was none other than the Messiah, the Son and Representative of Jehovah God. The reverence which she felt for Jehovah she sought to express toward his highest Representative, Jesus.

Poor Mary must have felt quite crushed as she heard the harsh criticism. But Jesus came to her defense, saying, "Let her alone. Why trouble ye the woman? She hath wrought a good work on me. She hath done what she could; she hath anointed my body for its burial. The poor ye have always with you; and whensoever ye will ye may do them good; but me ye have not always."

Surely the Master's approval comforted Mary; and wherever the Gospel of the Lord has been preached, this story of her loving devotion, to the extent of considerable cost and probably considerable self-denial, has been told as a memorial of her, not merely to honor her, but especially to inspire and encourage others of God's people to the obtaining and exercising of a love which delights in service, yea, in costly sacrifice.

A SUGGESTION WORTH CONSIDERATION

A Boston printer, now dead, put on his business card the following helpful and practical suggestions:—"Do not keep the alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed up until your friends are dead, but fill their lives with sweetness. Speak approving and cheering words while their ears can hear them. The kind things you say after they are gone, say before they go. The flowers you mean to send for their coffins, bestow now; and so brighten and sweeten their homes before they leave them.

"If my friends have alabaster boxes laid away, full of fragrant perfumes of sympathy and affection, which they intend to break over my dead body, I would rather they would bring them now in my weary and troubled hours, and open them, that I may be refreshed and cheered, while I need them and can enjoy them. I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, and a funeral without an eulogy, than a life without the sweetness of love and sympathy. Let us learn to anoint our friends beforehand for their burial.

"Post-mortem kindness cannot cheer the burdened spirit. Flowers on the coffin shed no fragrance backward over the weary way by which the loved ones have traveled."

TWO PASSOVER MEMORIALS

OCTOBER 11.—Mark 14:12-25.

"As oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do proclaim the Lord's death till he come."—1 Corinthians 11:26.

The subject of today's lesson is one of the most interesting features of Jesus' earthly ministry. He knew that the apostles did not know that this was to be his last supper with them. Although he had intimated the nearness of his death, his disciples had found it impossible to comprehend that any such disaster could be so near at hand as he had intimated. Jesus, however, with full consciousness of what it meant, was longing for the consummation of his work. It was probably on the very day at the close of which he and his disciples went to eat the Passover that Jesus said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I in difficulty until it be accomplished!"—a baptism into death, which was finished the following day.

Peter and John were the two disciples sent to make ready the Passover. Evidently Jesus was at Bethany, at the home of Lazarus, when he sent this word. It is supposed that the large upper room in which the Passover was eaten by Jesus and his disciples was the same one in which the apostles and others were gathered to await the Pentecostal blessings. This very room is still pointed out by tradition, but is controlled by Mohammedans, who are especially jealous of Christians.

In the evening of the same day, Jesus with the entire twelve met in this room, all the preparations having been attended to. They met to celebrate the Jewish Passover at its appointed time. The lamb had been roasted, and the unleavened bread prepared, also the bitter herbs. Everything,

we may be sure, was exactly in conformity with the original requirement; for Jesus and his apostles were bound by every feature of the Jewish law as much as were other Jews—the new dispensation not yet having been ushered in. Every feature of the law was binding up to the time of the Pentecostal blessing, which marked the divine approval of the sacrifice of Jesus and the divine acceptance of all those who had become his disciples by a full consecration.

KINGDOM HONORS DESIRED

So far from realizing that they were on the eve of a great tragedy, the apostles believed that Jesus would very soon be enthroned as King. They remembered his promise that they should sit with him in his throne. This promise seemed so near of realization to them that they could think of little else but the degree of honor which they would have in the kingdom. They seemed to feel that unless they contended stoutly for it, they would not get so honorable positions. Perceiving their attitude of mind, Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; but ye shall not be so: but he that will be greatest amongst you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve."

These were new standards, difficult for them to understand; and apparently they are still difficult for the followers of Jesus to comprehend fully. The one who will be chief in the kingdom will be the one who was the chief servant in the flesh. This greatest servant of all was, of course, the Lord Jesus himself. But the Master intimates that the same princi-

ple holds good in respect to all of his followers. Whoever of them will most faithfully, most earnestly, most zealously, serve the brethren will thereby be increasing his favor with God, and be preparing himself for so much higher station in Messiah's kingdom.

With the thought that any menial service would signify admission of their unworthiness of a high place, the disciples made no arrangement for feet-washing, none wishing to assume the role of servant. In that sandy country feet-washing was almost a necessity when sandals were worn. By way of rebuke, Jesus arose from the table and performed this menial service for his disciples, telling them the import of the lesson—namely, humility—and intimating that no matter how humble a service they might be able to render to each other, they should be glad to render it.

The lesson is still with us, not as a form or ceremony to be performed, but as an illustration of a principle. Any humble act of service done to one of the Lord's brethren corresponds to this feet-washing.

THE CRISIS IN JUDAS' LIFE

The Passover Supper proceeded—the eating of the lamb with the bitter herbs and the unleavened bread, which considerably resembled thick pancakes, and which was sometimes used instead of a spoon to sop up the essence of the meat. One of the Gospels declares that Jesus began to be heavy-hearted, and then said, One of you twelve, eating with me as my guest, as a member of my family, is plotting my betrayal.

There may have been a double object in this statement. First, it would show the disciples that Jesus was fully aware of the premeditated betrayal. They would not, therefore, think that something had happened to him unexpectedly, or out of the divine program. Second, our Lord may have meant this as a final reproof to Judas—to startle him, to cause him to think. At very best a traitor's course is dishonorable, but doubly so when the traitor accepts the hospitality of the one against whom he is plotting and eats his bread.

Consternation spread amongst the disciples; and one after another they asked, "Is it I?" The import of this question would be, It is not I whom you have meant! Even Judas joined in the general inquiry, "Is it I?" The Apostle John was seated next to Jesus, and St. Peter beckoned to him that he should ask the Master who was meant. It was probably a whispered inquiry, heard by Jesus only. Our Lord's whispered reply was, "It is the one to whom I will give a sop." Presently, having prepared a special sop, a mark of special interest, he handed it to Judas. Thus St. John and St. Peter knew the affair.

Apparently it was but a short time after this that Judas withdrew, the record being that "Satan entered into him." The spirit of the evil one got complete control of him while he stopped, and weighed and balanced the matter of selling his best friend for thirty pieces of silver. It is entirely probable, therefore, that Judas was not present when Jesus, a little later, instituted the Memorial Supper which Christians now celebrate.

THE SIGNIFICATION OF THE MEMORIAL

The Memorial Supper which Jesus instituted is totally separate and distinct from the Passover Supper, and yet they are closely related; for the one was the type and the other its archetype, or higher type, with a still higher signification. In the one a literal lamb was used to typify Jesus, the Lamb of God; in the other, the archetype, the breaking of the bread represented the death of Jesus.

The Jews celebrated the birth of their nation and its deliverance from Egyptian bondage. This had its start in the passing over of their first-born when the tenth plague came upon the Egyptians. St. Paul shows us that the first-born of Israel, spared in that Passover night, typified the church of the first-borns, spared, or passed over, in the present time, while the night of sin prevails and before the morning of Messiah's kingdom is ushered in.

More and more Bible students are reaching the conclusion that the Memorial of Christ's death should not be celebrated monthly or quarterly or weekly; but that it should be considered the archetype of the Jewish Passover, and should properly be celebrated annually, and at about the same time as the Jewish Passover.

We are not to understand that the apostles comprehended the meaning of Jesus' words when he explained to them the signification of the supper which he instituted. Rather, as he had already foretold, the holy Spirit brought these things to their attention and enabled them to comprehend their meaning, after they had received the Pentecostal blessing and enlightenment. Now we may see the import of Jesus' words, "This is my body, broken for you." We perceive that he could not have meant, as some have thought, that the bread was turned

into his actual body and the wine into his actual blood. On the contrary, he still had his actual body and his actual blood. He could not, therefore, have meant more than to say, This bread symbolically represents my body, which is to be broken for you; and this wine represents my blood, which is to be shed for you tomorrow—my life given up.

Neither should we think that Jesus meant that special virtue would result to the disciples from the eating of that bread and the drinking of that literal cup. We should properly look far beyond these things, and see that he meant this: Only as you by faith partake of the merits secured by death can you have the great blessing provided for you as my disciples. The apostles believed that the death of Jesus was for their sins, and that it constituted the basis of their acceptance with the heavenly Father. They realized that only as they appropriated the life of Christ would they be truly the recipients of all these blessings.

St. Paul points out for us another important signification of this bread and cup. He declares the oneness of Christ and his church. He tells us that there is but the one loaf and the one cup. Primarily, this loaf was Christ Jesus; but in a secondary sense all the followers of Christ, after having been justified through his sacrifice, are privileged to become members of his body, parts of the one loaf that is being broken. Likewise, after partaking of the merit of Christ's blood, his sacrifice, all of his true followers are counted as members with him and as participators in that one cup.

Hear the Apostle's words: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are partakers of that one bread."—1 Corinthians 10:16, 17.

THE SEALING OF THE NEW COVENANT

Jesus spoke of the cup, the fruit of the vine, as representing the blood of the New Covenant. The Law Covenant was the Old Covenant, which failed to bring the blessings to the Jews, because they could not keep it. Hence, also, they were not qualified to bless the other nations of the earth. But God promised a New Covenant, a better one, which would be introduced by a new and higher, or superior, Mediator than Moses. That New Covenant, God declares, will accomplish what the old Law Covenant failed to accomplish; for the New Law Covenant will be inaugurated by Messiah, its Mediator, at his second advent. His kingdom, established in power and great glory, will rule, bless and instruct mankind, and will "take away the stony heart and will give a heart of flesh" to all who will respond to those blessed opportunities.

Jesus' death constituted the blood which seals, or makes efficacious, that New Covenant. But mark further: The church is not to be blessed under that New Covenant of the Millennial age, which will be inaugurated at the second coming of Jesus, at the establishment of his kingdom. The church is to be blessed in advance of that New Covenant. Indeed, their consecrated lives (blood), accepted by our Lord, are counted in as a part of his own sacrifice, which seals the New Covenant. Hence the New Covenant cannot be fully sealed until the entire body of Christ, which is the church, shall have shared with him in the drinking of his cup—in the sacrifice of earthly rights, privileges, life itself.

THE COVENANT OF SACRIFICE

Meantime, we see that Jesus and the church receive their reward neither under the Law Covenant nor under the New Covenant, but under a special covenant, called a Covenant of Sacrifice. Reference is made to this covenant of Christ and the church in the Psalms, where the Lord is represented as saying, "Gather my saints together unto me, those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." (Psalm 50:5) The gathering of those who enter into this special Covenant of Sacrifice with the Lord has been in progress for now over eighteen hundred years. We have every reason to believe that the sacrifice is nearly completed, and that soon all the sacrificers, members of the body of Christ, will be glorified, changed by the power of the first resurrection and will enter into the joys of their Lord, according to his promise: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne."

Our Lord indicated that he would no longer drink of the cup; nor did he. His work, his drinking of the cup, was finished the next day, on Calvary. There he completed the drinking of the cup which the Father had poured for him. The Father has poured the same cup for all the followers of Jesus; and they must drink of his cup, as well as partake of the merits of his broken body, if they would be his joint-heirs in the kingdom, soon to be established.

This was the import of our Lord's words to St. James and

St. John, his disciples, when they asked for special places in the kingdom. Jesus asked, "Are ye able [willing] to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They heartily declared their willingness. Jesus assured them that they should have

their request; that if they were willing, he would see to it that they would drink of his cup. And so it is with all of his followers. The Scriptures assure them, saying, "All things shall work together for good to them that love God, to the called ones according to his purpose."

INTERESTING LETTERS

A REPLY BY THE EDITOR

Dear Brother Russell:—

I am pleased to acknowledge receipt of yours of 16th ultimo.

After making copies of your letter, I went to the Editor of the Gazette and submitted to him your original letter. After reading it he said he would publish all except that portion relating to ordination. I hand you herewith the page of the Gazette containing the article, and I praise the Lord for rewarding your efforts in defending the truth here.

Through the Lord's providence I had heretofore been able, apparently, to parry every blow directed against the truth, but in this attack of Rev. Ross the javelin seemed to pass me and strike notwithstanding my best efforts to turn it aside; but now the darkness disappears and the light again shines on the cause of present truth through the good defense which you have offered; the Lord has shown us again how he can make the "wrath of his enemies to praise him." The Editor of the *Mirror* (Protestant), a contemporary of the Gazette, told me he would run your letter in full.

Dear Brother, would it not be well to let your letter come out in one of the BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY or in THE WATCH TOWER? It would give many of the dear friends some good ideas as to how to offer defense along this special line of the adversary's attacks on you and the cause of present truth. I received a letter from a brother in Grenada, stating that some prominent Plymouth Brethren were circulating Rev. Ross' pamphlet. Of course, they will not circulate so very many, as the pamphlet costs 10 cents, and very few of the Plymouth Brethren or other denominations are willing to pay that much to defend their errors.

How grand it will be when the people are delivered from the bondage of error! I am glad for the ministers' sake also, for they will not have to fight any more, and I am sure that will be a great relief to their minds! One Catholic gentleman told me that Catholics and others could argue with us until we got to the Bible, and then they had to stop!

Assuring you of my continued love and fullest confidence, since you have always had and which have never wavered since I laid my life upon the altar of sacrifice in 1897, I am,
Yours in the Redeemer's service, E. J. COWARD.

Below we reprint the portion of our letter as published in *The Port-of-Spain Gazette*, Trinidad, B. W. I.:

PASTOR RUSSELL REPLIES.

Mr. E. J. Coward,

Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, B. W. I.

Dear Brother in Christ:—Yours of October 3rd is before me. Thanks for its clippings from the *Gazette* and the *Evangelical Christian*.

I am quite familiar with the slanderous screed issued by Rev. J. J. Ross. In Canada they have just two laws governing libel. Under the one the falsifier may be punished by the assessment of damages and money. Under the other, criminal libel, he is subject to imprisonment. I entered suit against Rev. Ross under the criminal act, at the advice of my attorneys, because, as he has no property, a suit for damages would not intimidate him nor stop him. The lower Court found him guilty of libel. But when the case went to the second Judge he called up an English precedent, in which it was held that criminal libel would only operate in a case where the jury felt sure that there was danger of rioting or violence. As there was no danger that myself or friends would resort to rioting, the case was thrown out. I could still bring my action for financial damages, but it would be costly to me and impotent as respects Rev. Ross. He, however, is having troubles of his own. Since he began to attack me, he has split two Baptist Congregations—one in Toronto, the other in Hamilton. The last heard of him, he was in London, Ont., and again in trouble with his congregation. A lying spirit is sure to be a boomerang.

As respects my education in Greek and Hebrew: Not only do I not claim very special knowledge of either language, but I claim that not one minister in a thousand is either a Hebrew or a Greek scholar. To be able to spell out a few Greek words is of no earthly value. Nor is it necessary longer to study these languages, in order to have knowledge of the Bible. Our Presbyterian friends have gotten out at great cost Young's Analytical Hebrew, Chaldaic, Greek and English Lexicon Con-

cordance, which anyone may procure. And our Methodist friends have issued a similar work—Strong's Analytical Concordance and Lexicon. And there is a still older one entitled Englishman's Hebrew, Chaldaic, Greek and English Lexicon and Concordance. Additionally, Liddell and Scott's Greek Lexicon is a standard authority. The prices of these are not beyond the reach of the average man. By these works scholarly information respecting the original text of the Bible is obtainable. I have all four of these works and have used them faithfully. Very few college professors, even, would risk to give a critical translation of any text of Scripture without consulting these very works of reference, which are standard. To merely learn to read the Greek and Hebrew without a six years' course in their grammars is more likely to hinder than to help in Bible study; far better take the acknowledged scholarship to which I have referred.

Additionally I remind you of the many translations of the Bible now extant—all of them very good. I have all of these and find them useful in comparison in the study of any text—one sometimes giving a thought which another may not. The other day, for curiosity's sake, I counted Bibles in different translations, etc., in my study and found that I have thirty-two.

As respects my business dealings, Brother Coward, I need not remind you that *American Courts are very strict and that if anybody feels that I have wronged him out of a dollar, he would have no difficulty in haling me into Court.* You have my assurance, dear Brother, that I do not owe any man on earth a penny and that I have never taken a penny from anyone unjustly. On the contrary, as you know, I have spent several small fortunes in seeking to do good to my fellow-men—in helping them to a better understanding of God and the Bible. Having once been an infidel myself, and having subsequently found that I had confused the teachings of the Bible with the teachings of the creeds, and that the Bible's teaching is a glorious, grand doctrine, it has since been my business and pleasure to do all in my power to help fellow-mortals out of darkness into the true light.

* * *

If you choose, you may make such extracts of this as are likely to reach intelligent people through any of the newspapers. But really I care little for what men may say or think about me. Of course, such things are painful; but they are only what the Bible tells us will be more or less the experience of all who would be loyal to God and his Word. So persecuted they the saints and prophets of the past—even the Master himself. And as for how I got my education—it seems to me of little consequence. I have enough to serve my own purposes, and, apparently, too much to please Rev. Ross and others of his type, who, not knowing how to meet my theological teachings, do not attempt to do so at all, but merely charge me with ignorance. As I read his vile slanders I thought of what the New Testament says about St. Peter and St. John. They were so woefully ignorant that all the people perceived that they were "ignorant and unlearned men." If they were living today, I suppose that the Rev. Ross and Co. would be after them to show them up as not having been ordained by the Baptists and not knowing anything anyway.

Very truly your servant in the Lord,

C. T. RUSSELL.

The portion of our communication omitted above, follows:

I need not tell you how absurdly untrue Rev. Ross's statements are in respect to my ordination; but really it seems strange how little people use their thinking faculties in such matters—how few who would read the Rev. Ross's statements would see their absurdity. For instance, he is a Baptist and was authorized or ordained by the Baptists—not by Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Catholics or Episcopalians. Would an Episcopalian recognize Rev. Ross' ordination? Surely not! Would a Roman Catholic recognize his ordination? Of course not. Ordination merely means authorization. The Catholics will authorize, or ordain, those only who belong to their faith. The Baptists will ordain, or authorize, those only who are Baptists. How foolish, then, to talk about ordination from their standpoint!

But ordination from my standpoint, the Bible standpoint, the standpoint of an increasing number of Bible students all the world over, is different. It is a divine ordination. But our Baptist friends and our Methodist friends would say that