

The lesson to all who seek to be in harmony with the Lord is that they are not to follow the course of the great and the influential of Christendom, but to follow the Lord,

to hearken to his Word, and to humbly follow in the footsteps of our dear Redeemer. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

ENGLAND FACE TO FACE WITH SOCIALISM

One hundred and fifty archbishops and bishops, a multitude of minor clergy, and an assemblage of laymen and laywomen outnumbered any hitherto gathered in Albert hall.

The bishop of Birmingham, who was scheduled to preside, was absent owing to illness. He sent a paper, which was read by his substitute, the bishop of Manchester, the keynote of which was the injustice of the existing division of the profits of industry. After contrasting the grinding poverty of the workers with the extravagant luxury of the idle rich, he demanded from the church "a tremendous act of penitence for having failed so long and so greatly to champion the oppressed and weak."

RIISING TIDE OF SOCIALISM

The Rev. J. G. Simpson, principal of the clergy school at Leeds, assured the vast audience that all over the north of England they were face to face with the rising tide of Socialism, which they were powerless to stem even if they wished to do so. Countless workers in the forges, furnaces, and mills of the north had adopted the Socialistic idea and held to it like a religion and loved it like a bride. He demanded that the church give free field to Socialism. He appealed to it to try to understand it and not hasten to discount it.

More significant than the speeches themselves was the keen interest shown in the Socialistic pleas and earnest enthusiasm with which such points as those given were greeted from all parts of the hall.—*Chicago Daily Socialist*.

"MEN'S HEARTS FAILING THEM"

"Daily it becomes more manifest that political America is separating into two camps—the Individualists and the Socialists. . . . A new party has been created, and it is not extravagant to intimate it will poll two million votes next November. It threatens to destroy the Democratic party (though that is a job the Democratic Party has already accomplished to all intents and purposes), and will then strive for the mastery against the Republican Party. That would fetch the new alignment of conservative vs. liberal, of Individualism vs. Socialism. That is what is coming."—*Washington Post*.

THE JEWISH OUTLOOK

The recent quiet Turkish revolution, which has brought to the front the "Young Turk" party, is said to be favorable to the hopes of the Jews in respect to their securing some kind of a footing in Palestine with a subordinate self-government. The new government is credited with being quite liberal toward Jews and Christians.

Rabbi Judah Leon Mages says:

"Since Titus razed Jerusalem thousands of years ago, Israel has been a wanderer among foreign nations, an alien among strangers; at first bitterly persecuted, then barely tolerated, and latterly beginning to be respected and honored, but still an outcast, with no home toward which to turn his wandering footsteps. And yet, remarkable as is the fact, he has preserved his individuality through it all. Whether he is a professor in a German university, or a banker in France, or a statesman in England, the Jew is a Jew still, and under the veneer of envying social life lies the tearful yearning for his native land.

"When we turn our footsteps toward Zion," continued the doctor, his eyes kindling with enthusiasm, "we shall number among the citizens of the renewed Jewish commonwealth some of the most famous men of modern times, men who are en-

gaged in creating the world history of today. Our government will serve as a model for the whole world. And in the arts and crafts Jerusalem will be a standard. I have no small faith in Israel. What he is doing now, scattered throughout the world, he will be able to do tenfold when he is united, safe from the fear of hate or prejudice.

PURCHASING PALESTINE HOLDINGS

"This is not all purely visionary. The work is already going on rapidly in Palestine. We have acquired extensive tracts of land from the Sultan of Turkey, and we are constantly increasing our holdings. Very soon we will be in a position to ask for a release from the authority of the Sultan. England favors the project, and we are sure of the assistance of the United States. Large areas of land are already under cultivation, and we are planting an immense grove of olive trees, to be called the Theodore Herzl Memorial Grove, in memory of the revered founder of Zionism.

"Israel was originally a farmer. It was only upon his expulsion from his native land, forbidden to hold territory in any of the countries he sought to make his home, that he became a trader, and by his native wit became so apt at it that it has almost become a characteristic of the race. Now, however, in his own home, at peace with all nations, and with the latest inventions of science at his command, he will make the beautiful valley of the Jordan to 'blossom as the rose.' And there under the serene eastern sun, he can let his soul drift back softly into the meditations of his beloved religion and live out his days 'a blessing and a comfort to the nations.'"

REVULSION AGAINST HELL TORMENT TOWARD FAITHS WITHOUT FOUNDATION

The Rev. J. R. Hutton, D.D., of Glasgow, preaching in New York City, said:—

"We hear much in these days of the fascination which Roman Catholic or High Church views are having for many minds. Now, the claim that these churches really put forward is that the church, through its sacraments and prayers of the saints, will take the responsibility for the souls of its members and so relieve them of a certain 'intolerable strain.' We hear that the claim is proving the attraction. I think the significance is just this, that these systems put the accent and emphasis not on what the worshiper does for himself but on what God has done for him and is prepared to do.

"Take another movement which I think has a very close resemblance to this drift toward the Roman Catholic attitude in England. I mean the movement originating in America, but which has its agents in all cultured lands, which goes variously by the name of Christian Science, Mind Culture and the rest. It has succeeded because with a certain passion and unfairness it rejects from the entire life of the soul such words as 'striving,' 'wrestling' and 'fighting.' The movement has won a success just because it promises to take the strain off our minds, because it bids men to stop thinking about themselves and begin thinking out of themselves toward the infinite peace of God. All that is true in both these movements is not new, and all that is new is not true. There are signs that the human soul is tired of the ethical whip, tired of the summons to strenuousness, and is determined now to try the life of faith."

* * *

What man really needs is the Bible faith, the faith once delivered to the saints, but now, alas! obscured to almost all.

HOMING THE ARK AT JERUSALEM

2 Samuel 6:1-12.—OCTOBER 4.

Golden Text—"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise."—Psa. 100:4.

The Ark of the Covenant, wherein was deposited the tables of the law, the basis of God's covenant with Israel, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the golden pot of manna, was the most sacred article of typical Israel's religious emblems. Its lid, consisting of a golden plate surmounted with two cherubs, constituted the mercy-seat—the meeting place between God and the officiating priests, who acted as mediator between God and the nation of Israel. When in the Tabernacle, the divine presence was manifested upon the mercy-seat between the cherubim by a miraculous light called the shekinah glory. For seventy years prior to our lesson the ark had been neg-

lected and in considerable degree the religion of the nation had likewise been neglected, though it is presumed that their devotions as individuals were not entirely forgotten, even as in David's case, we note his continued reliance upon the Lord and appeals to him.

It will be remembered that the ark was in the Tabernacle of the Lord at Shiloh when Samuel was a boy and Eli was high priest, and that later, when the latter was aged and Samuel was grown, in a battle with the Philistines the sons of Eli, who were disreputable, self-seeking, grasping characters, took the ark into battle as a talisman or mascot, believing

that the Lord would protect the ark and that thus the army of Israel with it would have success. But the iniquity of Eli's sons had reached its full and God willed that they should fall in the battle and that the ark should be captured by the Philistines and that Eli himself should die of heart failure upon hearing the news of the disaster, and that Samuel should occupy the place of judge, prophet and priest to the Lord.

It will also be remembered that while the ark was with the Philistines it brought them no blessing, but on the contrary sickness, trouble, etc., or "bad luck," as some would say. It was thus sent from one Philistine city to another, each being glad to get rid of it until finally they put it upon a cart and started it eastward to the land of Israel. There it was received by the priest Abinadab and lodged in his own house. There it had remained for several years up to the time of this lesson, when David had become King of Israel.

PERVANT IN SPIRIT

As we have already seen King David possessed a very deep religious nature, whose center or will had been early turned in full consecration to the Lord. Realizing that God was the real King of Israel and that he himself was merely God's vice-gerent or representative, David sought to fulfill the divine will and arrangement by inaugurating the Tabernacle and its religious services, as God had appointed through Moses. Accordingly a royal decree went forth summoning the priests, Levites and tribal princes and religious people of the various parts of the dominion for the reinauguration of the public worship of Jehovah. The scope of the decree may be judged from the assembled multitude—30,000. It matters not to us that some are inclined to impugn the motives of the king and to claim that this was merely a policy stroke of the king for the binding of the people to himself through his religious instincts and a revival of ancient customs. If it were merely policy on David's part, it was good policy, wise policy, helpful policy as respects the people, as well as in respect to unifying and solidifying his kingdom. To be religious did not necessitate the avoidance of such things as would be good for the people, even though some might impugn the motive. But the love which thinketh no evil should be experienced and the king should be given credit for the best of motives in calling for the fulfilment of divine commands given through Moses.

Indeed, those who have learned to look for the Lord's leading, amongst the Lord's people, in all the affairs of life should be convinced that God did not leave the affairs of his people Israel in the hands of David—that the Lord himself was King and Director of all of the interests of that chosen and covenanted people. In our estimate, therefore, it matters not what motive David may have had in calling this convocation, because God was behind it and David, wittingly or unwittingly was being used as the divine agent in accomplishing the divine purposes. And it will surely do us good to call to mind that similarly the Lord has a special interest in all the matters which pertain to spiritual Israel and that no great or important matters that pertain to spiritual Zion take place without his notice, without his permission. Only those who thus recognize the divine supervision of the church's interest can rest their hearts in faith and confidence or feel assured that God is working all things according to the counsel of his own will.

We feel specially impressed with the special evidences which show that God's supervision was particularly with Israel in their harvest time, at the end of the age, in all of the affairs pertaining to our Lord's first advent: his birth in the "fullness of time," his death "in due time," the number of his disciples, the one that should betray him, his crucifixion as a malefactor, the rejection of Israel because of the rejection of Messiah, the anointing of the "most holy" at Pentecost, the final overthrow of the nation, A. D. 70. And if we note such particular care by the Lord over natural Israel, may we not experience as much faith in his care for Spiritual Israel in the present harvest time? Surely the lessons we have learned in the Scriptures respecting the harmonious parallels between the Jewish age and the Gospel age, between the harvest of that age and the harvest of this age, justify fully our expectation that the Lord will be equally careful in overruling even the smallest affairs in the harvest of this age.

Whoever can by faith reach and maintain this position will surely have a confidence in the Lord which will be very helpful to him. The trials and difficulties of the Jewish harvest seemed like calamities at the moment of their permission, and it is only by hind-sight directed by the holy Spirit and prophetic Word that we are able to discern God's providences there. Similarly calamities, adversities, peculiar conditions, etc., are to be expected in this harvest, which at the time of occurrence will not be understood by any except

those of large faith and intimate acquaintance with the prophecies, and even they will be obliged to walk by faith and not by sight. It will be *afterward* that the divine supervision in every detail will be discernible. Meantime the Lord wills evidently that the spiritual Israelite, instructed in the school of Christ, shall have learned the lessons of faith and obedience from the harvest time of typical Israel.

"OBEDIENCE BETTER THAN SACRIFICE"

The occasion of bringing the ark of God to the capital city of the nation was to be a gala day of rejoicing, long to be remembered from one end of Israel's land to the other. King David rejoiced at the unanimity of religious sentiment everywhere prevalent with the people who accepted his instructions. The players of musical instruments of every kind had been engaged so as to accompany the procession. An ox-cart, specially prepared, was provided and the ark was put upon the cart and the two sons of the high-priest accompanied it, the one preceding and the other driving. The good intentions of all concerned are not to be misjudged, but a serious error was made in that the divine order in connection with the matter was neglected.

(1) God had made no such arrangement of transferring the ark on a cart, however honorable that may have seemed to David and to the priests.

(2) It was not the business of the priests at all to transfer the ark, for, although they ranked high in the Lord's services, it was the Levites who were commissioned to bear the ark by its staves on their shoulders. In neglecting these divine provisions an opening was made for all kinds of irregularity in connection with the services of the Tabernacle, which the Lord designed should not be reinaugurated. It was proper that the king, the priests, the nobles of all the tribes and the religious people of the nation should have a lesson that would not soon be forgotten respecting the importance of carrying out every detail of the divine law in respect to the worship and services of the Tabernacle. The lesson which the Lord gave on this occasion not only was profitable to the king and the nation, but has been profitable in a large degree to Spiritual Israel during this Gospel age.

When the time came for the manifestation of the Lord's disapproval of the neglect of the law on the part of those who desired to honor him, the oxen stumbled and, to steady the ark, Uzzah, an under-priest, put forth his hand, when immediately God's displeasure was manifested in his falling down dead. The gala day was suddenly spoiled. The joy of the king and of the people vanished. Instead came distress and fear—if because of some blunder even one of the priests should be thus smitten down of the Lord, what would be the dangers as respects others! King David promptly concluded that he dare not have the ark with him and near his own house at Jerusalem, as previously intended. The procession stopped and, turning aside the ark was deposited in the home of Obed-edom.

"THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM"

One of the first lessons necessary for every Israelite, natural and spiritual, is reverence. Without this quality we shall be sure to err. There is an old and true adage, "Familiarity breeds contempt," and this applies to religious things and to God, as well as to earthly things and to men. The worship of God, which King David was to inaugurate in the typical temple built by Solomon, must be founded upon a proper base of respect and reverence. It must be recognized as fundamental, that obedience is a pre-requisite to the offering of acceptable sacrifices to the Lord.

The fact that this lesson was taught at the expense of human life has seemed to us terrible, because of our delusion in respect to eternal torment, which led us to suppose that poor Uzzah not only ceased from human activities and pleasures but that he was immediately dropped into a seething abyss of hell-flames and torture. Now, by the grace of God, we see that this is not the teaching of the Scriptures, and this relieves the narrative of its distressing features. We perceive that Uzzah lost his life a year or so earlier, as the case might have been, than he otherwise would have lost it, and that it was for the Lord's glory and for the good of the people that he died as he did and not by disease or accident. We are to remember that he was already, like the rest of the race, under condemnation of death and that God had a perfect right to require his life at any moment. We are to remember that all that he lost was of God's purpose and in God's time will be made good to him, in his awakening in the resurrection of judgment, when he shall come forth from the tomb to more favorable conditions than those under which he was living—to the antitypical jubilee of restitution to all who will receive it.

Spiritual Israelites must learn this lesson—that in handling

the holy things of the divine Word, the divine plan, the services of the truth, the ministry of the church of Christ, they are not at liberty to do as they please, merely assuring themselves that their motives are good. It is their duty to note carefully the divine will and to follow out the program in the order of the directions of the divine Word. Furthermore it is for us to learn, too, that God designs that not all the services are to be performed by one or two persons, but that there is a part in the service of God for all of the consecrated and that each is to be granted the opportunity for such service, as the Lord has planned. Some may occupy the priestly service, while others may not enjoy, and some may occupy the Levites' service, and their opportunities are not to be taken from them. Again another important lesson to be learned by Spiritual Israelites is that God is guiding his own affairs; that he is as much interested in them as we are and more, too, and that he is fully capable of their management. Some of the Lord's people carry great burdens which do not belong to them and which hinder them from the rest and joy which otherwise might be theirs. Others are so active, so zealous, that they fancy that the work of God would not be accomplished at all unless they did it. The Lord wishes us to learn the important lesson, "In all thy ways acknowledge him," "and he shall give thee the desires of thy heart." Only by recognizing the Lord as first in every feature of his work and by recognizing ourselves as honored by him in every opportunity of service shall we be able to bring blessing to ourselves and to others.

PROFITING BY EXPERIENCE

If we think of David's course in refusing to bring the ark to Jerusalem, as at first intended, as a mark of petulance and anger against the Lord for spoiling the gala day, we shall make a great mistake. David's character was too reverential for anything of this kind. He was the man who could fight Goliath, but not the man who could fight against God. Every act of his life was marked by reverence and humility and a recognition of God's justice and power and love and of David's own humility in the Lord's sight. Meantime the Lord was teaching a great lesson to the whole nation, which heard of the sad disappointment of the people with reference to the great gala day and that God's displeasure was shown in such a striking way that even a priest was stricken down for neglect of the divine supervision, and that the ark was now in the house of Obed-edom.

King David was watching, and noted these results, and again his heart went out longingly with the wish that the chief emblem of divine worship should rest under the shadow of the Lord, near to the Lord and to the shekinah glory. Evidently he made investigation as to the handling of the ark and concluded that the mistake was that of himself and of the priests and that God's blessing and not a curse would go with the ark. So at the end of three months he made arrangements afresh for the bringing of it to his capital. Again the visitors came, the bands of music in order, and the procession accompanied the ark again towards Jerusalem. We read that David brought the ark from the house of Obed-edom unto the City of David with gladness and with joy.

A description of the festival procession may be found in 1 Chron. 15 and 16. It was decidedly the greatest day in David's career. But this time, in harmony with the lesson taught, there were no innovations, no cart driven by priests after the manner of the heathen, but instead a strict adherence to the divine direction. The ark was borne on the shoulders of the Levites. The lesson was learned that obedience to the

letter is better than sacrifice. In the joyous procession the king apparently led, playing upon the harp, while with him the singers and the musicians were divided into several companies which sang parts in alternation. See Psalms 105, 96 and 106. The 24th Psalm is supposed to have been sung as a marching accompaniment as the procession was entering Jerusalem, where a tent or tabernacle had already been placed for the reception of the ark. Seven choirs formed part of the procession, according to Josephus.

OTHER LESSONS FOR SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

Members of antitypical David—the Christ—are to learn lessons from all the experiences of life; that with them it may be as it was with David in this case, when the proposed gala day was turned into a day of mourning and fear. Similarly our mistakes are to be received rightly and the reasons for them rightly appreciated that, instead of stumbling-stones, they may be stepping-stones which shall draw us "Nearer my God, to thee." Another lesson is that we should desire to be nearer to the Lord.

The ark in the Tabernacle near to David's home represented not its glorious resting place, but its present dwelling. The condition of the church in glory is represented by the Temple of Solomon. We, of course, long to be there and to enter into all those glorious things of the future, but that is impossible until the Lord's time, even as David was not permitted to build the Temple. Thus his life shows a picture not of the Beloved in glory, but of the flesh in the trial state below. As David desired to be near to the Tabernacle, close to the Lord, so we, members of the Beloved, should find ourselves longing for a closer walk with God, a nearness to his arrangement of the mercy-seat—Christ Jesus. This will signify a desire to be near to the members of his body, the church, to have fellowship with them, because the condition of things is represented as being the "holy" of the Tabernacle, with only a veil between this and that glorious condition beyond the veil. And is it not so that whoever desires to be near to the Lord and to those in fellowship with him, along the lines of the new nature, will give heed to the privileges of showing forth his praise by manifesting their love for the brethren and their confidence and faith in the Lord and in his light and wisdom and love?

"ENTER INTO HIS GATES WITH THANKSGIVING"

In some respects the city of God is the church—not the nominal system, but the true church, whose "names are written in heaven." According to the Apostle the justified believers can enter into this city only by consecration. The Apostle exhorts, "I beseech you, brethren, present your bodies a living sacrifice." There are some who seem to enter this gateway of sacrifice in sorrow and with a measure of regret—with a feeling that they are sacrificing too much. They either overestimate the things sacrificed or they underestimate the things which they are securing. It would have been better for such if they had sat down and counted the cost before taking the step of consecration. The proper attitude of all is to take a right view of that which now is and that which is to come and what we have contracted to do as priests, doing it, then, joyfully. And thus this lesson is learned, that we "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise." The appreciative child of God will be able to "count it all joy" when he falls into various difficulties, because it will be a trial of his faith that "Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope," which maketh not ashamed and is a preparation for the glories of the kingdom.

THERE HAS NOT FAILED ONE PROMISE

1 Chron. 17:1-14.—OCTOBER 11.

Golden Text:—"There hath not failed one word of all his good promise."—1 Kings 8:50.

King David prospered under the Lord's blessing, and he established Israel's kingdom upon a good footing, which assured peace and respect from the surrounding nations. Living now in a palace in Jerusalem, with the tabernacle of divine service near by, the king bethought him of the incongruity of his living in a grander house than that of his God, and of the fact that the heathen built temples for their idols. The Prophet Nathan was a friend and close counselor of the king, and to him David made known his thought of building a temple. Possibly he had the suspicion that such an innovation might not be proper and that he would do well to have counsel on the subject. Doubtless the lesson of Uzzah made him more careful respecting everything purposed or done in connection with the tabernacle and its services. To the prophet the suggestion seemed a good one, reverential, proper. He endorsed it, saying, "God is with thee," therefore doubtless

he will prosper you in this good thought in respect to this generous impulse of your heart.

God was doubtless pleased also with David's reverent devotion. Nevertheless he disapproved the scheme and sent to the king a message by the mouth of the prophet, "Thou shalt not build me an house." Here again we are to notice that "obedience is better than sacrifice" in God's sight. God is not dependent upon the thoughtfulness nor the negligence of mankind in respect to his arrangements, but takes an oversight. It was not the part of the divine programme that David should build the tabernacle, but that his son Solomon should do so. David and Solomon and their surroundings were to constitute types of glorious things to come later pertaining to the antitypical David and his kingdom. In 1 Chron. 22:8 and 28:3 a reason is given why David should not be the builder of the temple. He was a man of experience in fight-

ing enemies of the Lord, and his people should serve to typify the battling of Christ and the church while in the flesh. Solomon's kingdom of glory and riches and honor and peace would service to illustrate better the Millennial kingdom of the Christ in glory.

"THE LORD WILL BUILD THEE AN HOUSE"

The Lord explained through the prophet that he had never wished a temple—had never given a command to that effect—that this was a matter of his own choice and not neglect upon the part of the Israelites during the centuries since the Lord had established his presence with them at Mount Sinai. Then, as though to console David and to assure him that God appreciated his good intentions, the prophet was directed to recite the evidences of divine care and supervision of the king's affairs—that God had taken him from the shepherd's position and made him a prince and leader of his people, conquering his enemies before him. He assured him that such a blessing would continue with him until his name should be known amongst the great of earth. Prophetically the Lord declared also a blessing for Israel, when they should be no more oppressed nor scattered by their enemies. That prophecy had a temporary fulfilment under David and Solomon, but is to have its real accomplishment under the kingdom of God's dear Son.

Proceeding (1 Chron. 17:10) the Lord assures David that he would build a house for him—that is to say, that he would not cut his family off from the throne, as in the case of Saul. The house of David was indeed perpetuated through Solomon and continued its dominance in Judah for several centuries, but this would not completely fulfil the Lord's promise, which, although not understood by David, was evidently meant to refer expressly to Messiah and his kingdom.

One of the familiar titles of our Lord was, "The son of David," and this was in harmony with the expectation of all Israel—that ultimately Messiah, the Seed of Abraham, would come through the seed of David and would be the everlasting King. This promise is referred to as "The sure mercies of David." It was in accord with this expectation of the Jews that our Lord said to them, "If Messiah is the son of David, why is he also called David's Lord?" where he says, "Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool."

Our Lord shows that David thus prophetically declared that David's son would be David's Lord or superior. "He is the root and offspring of David," through whom David and Israel and all the families of the earth shall yet be blessed.

"HE SHALL BUILD ME AN HOUSE AND I WILL ESTABLISH HIS THRONE FOREVER. I WILL BE HIS FATHER AND HE SHALL BE MY SON"—V. 12

It will be noticed that these words were primarily applicable to Solomon, who did build the typical temple; but the weight of the promise belongs to the antitype, Christ, the Messiah. He it is who will build the real temple of God in and through which a blessing shall proceed to all the families of the earth. It will in the highest sense of the word be "an house of prayer unto all people." During the Millennial age, when the glorious temple of God, the church of the living God, shall be in the glory of the kingdom, all prayers to God and all blessings from God will pass through that glorified temple which, under another figure, Head and body, is referred to as the Mediator between God and men. It will be remembered that while King David was not permitted to construct the temple he was privileged to prepare for it vast treasures of gold, silver, brass, precious stones, marbles of various colors, iron and wood.

As it was in David's heart to build the temple, so naturally the desire comes to the Lord's people in the present time to establish the things of the Lord and his kingdom. Some, anxious to do this, have not taken counsel of the prophets of God to know his will, but have presumed to build up earthly institutions quite contrary to the divine intention as respects this present age. Catholicism has built wonderful institutions, which it invites the whole world to join. Various denominations have erected temples or systems, each of which claims to be God's kingdom, God's temple, but the Lord disowns all of these and declares that he is now with his people, under temporary conditions tabernacling with those who are his wherever they may be and not wishing at the present for any such organizations as men have supposed. The Apostle expresses this when he says, "We who are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." Our conditions are not fully satisfactory, but they are all that the Lord sees best for us to have at the present time.

The Apostle calls the present condition of the body of

Christ, "Our body of humiliation," but he assures us that at the second coming of our Lord he will "change our vile body" (our ignominious condition) so that it may be fashioned properly, as his glorious body, as the glorious temple of the living God. Now is the time for gathering the various elements, gold, silver, precious stones, etc., which by and by shall constitute the Lord's temple. Now is the time, not only for the quarrying of the stones, but also for the shaping of them for their various positions in the temple of God. Now, as the Apostle Peter suggests, "We are living stones, to be built together for a habitation of God through the spirit." The preparation of the stones will continue until eventually all shall be properly fitted into the building. We are now under the process of shaping, being "made meet (made fit) for the inheritance of the saints." All this is being done under the present condition of wars and strife and confusion. By and by, "Without the sound of a hammer," every stone of that glorious structure shall be fitted together, all being perfected in heart reckonedly will in the resurrection "change" be actually perfected and "changed"; as the Apostle says, "Sown in weakness, it is raised in power; sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."

HIS THRONE FOREVERMORE

The throne of David and of Solomon was not perpetually established. Indeed, as heretofore shown, our Lord, according to the flesh, sprung not from Solomon's line, but descended from another of David's sons. This makes it the more evident that Christ was meant by the divine prophecies as the heir of David's throne who should establish it forever to a consummation—reigning, ruling, blessing, uplifting, bringing it into perfect accord with God. This gives us a good opportunity of noting how God hides and reveals the Truth at the same time and why it is that the "line upon line, precept upon precept," is to one flock food, refreshing, strength, and to another stumbling-blocks, etc., which, according to Higher Criticism, overthrows all confidence in the Bible as divine revelation. Thus is illustrated the saying that "one man's meat is another man's poison."

How much depends upon the attitude of our hearts! We are to "become as little children." Our Lord said, "I thank thee, O Father, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." God's people are to learn the lesson of trust and patience.

"God's plans, like lilies pure and white unfold;
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart;
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold."

"THERE HATH NOT FAILED ONE WORD"

Our Golden Text is a precious one and fully corroborated by every faithful follower of the Lord who has had experience in the good way. The difficulty with those who have not had this experience is that they have not been particular to note the difference between God's promises recorded in his Word and the traditions of men, which misrepresent the Lord's promises. All about us today we see great disputations amongst the nominal church and the impression that God's purpose is meeting with disappointment. The thought has been prevalent that God designed the various sects to build for themselves temples and to bless and convert the world. The fact that after eighteen centuries the world is far from God and his will far from being done on earth as it is done in heaven is most evident; and when it is recollected that the number of the heathen, according to public statistics, has doubled in the last century, it is no wonder that our friends, who think that they have been laboring under a divine commission to use all their efforts in converting the world, should feel disappointed.

Let us note carefully the promise as it is outlined in this lesson, namely, that the temple of God is not to be built in this age and the world is not to be blessed now; and the construction of the temple is not to take place until all the stones shall be prepared. So the work of blessing all the families of the earth through that temple and its great Head, Priest and Prophet, King, Judge and Messiah cannot be accomplished until all the stones are prepared and the temple of the Lord, the church, has been glorified. Let us not blame God with a non-fulfilment of our expectations, but on the contrary, let us examine the Word and assure ourselves that we are not building wood, hay and stubble, which will surely be destroyed, but that we are building upon the precious promises of the Word. From this standpoint all the trials and difficulties, all the battling with the world and the adversary, all the adversities coming to ourselves and to others of the Lord's consecrated, are but encouraging evidences that we are

the Lord's and that he is working out for us, as well as in us, his good pleasure. With this view before our mental vision the Spirit of God witnesses with our spirit that we are having exactly the experiences which his faithful should

expect and that all things will work in us for our welfare—because we are his—and for the glory of his kingdom.

"His love in times past forbids me to think
He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink."

SWEET DAY OF REST

(Tune: Saved By Grace)

I know some day my Lord will come,
And stand within my humble home;
His glorious presence in the room
Will make it like a rose in bloom.

CHO.—Then haste, Oh! hasten, day of rest,
When I shall be forever blest!

His voice, like music on my ear,
Will banish every thought of fear;
He'll fold me closely to his breast,
And there in peace I'll sweetly rest.

And oh, my Lord, on that sweet day,
I know the words that thou wilt say:
"It is enough, my child, come home,
Thy work is done, beloved, come."

Then I'll arise and go with thee,
Across the shining, crystal sea,
Until we reach that blissful shore,
Where we shall dwell for evermore.

G. W. Seibert.

"AS BY ONE MAN'S DISOBEDIENCE"

One of our readers inquires how Christ could "appear for us," the church, without appearing for Adam or having atoned for him, when Adam was the real transgressor and we merely sharers in transgression through our relationship to him.

We reply that the questioner really answers his own argument: Adam alone was perfect—Adam alone was placed on trial and he alone by disobedience came under a direct sentence of death. Of his posterity it was written that we were "born in sin and shapen in iniquity." In this imperfect condition we were unfit for another trial, as was demonstrated by the Jews, who, as a special favor, were put under the Law Covenant, which they thought they could keep, and under which they expected to gain eternal life. But the Apostle explains that under its terms they were condemned to death. The same would have been true of all the remainder of mankind under similar conditions, but no such conditions were either thrust upon or offered to mankind in general. Israel alone was put under that law and is guaranteed a certain blessing as a result of the experiences then unsatisfactorily endured. Be it noted here that the fact that they were put under that special trial, and thus specially condemned, made it necessary that they should be redeemed as a nation. Thus we read that our Lord was "born under the law (Covenant)" that he might redeem them who were under the law (Covenant)." (Gal. 4:5.) Had he been born outside of the Jewish nation the redemption of the world in general would have been the same as now, but the Jewish nation would not have shared it because by their Law Covenant sealed at Sinai they were, so to speak, lifted out from the remainder of mankind and given a separate trial—as a nation—as the adopted family of Moses, their recognized mediator.

As the Lord could make a conditional covenant with natural Israel through Moses, their mediator, so likewise he could make a conditional arrangement with spiritual Israel through Christ our Head and Representative. God's arrangement with believers during this Gospel age is by a faith-justification of all those who turn from sin and accept Jesus as their Redeemer. He "appeared for us" who are of this class; he now represents us to the Father, appropriating to us the merit of his sacrifice, thereby making it possible for those of this "household of faith" who make a full consecration of themselves to the Father to be acceptable through Christ Jesus, who accepts these consecrated ones as his "members in particular"—his *Ecclesia*, his church. Their acceptance is based upon their covenant to walk in the steps of their Redeemer as living sacrifices. Only those who maintained this relationship faithfully will attain the heart-likeness of their Redeemer and become worthy to be of the "little flock," which the Father has predestinated must be individually heart-copies of his Son.

ADAM ONLY WAS CONDEMNED

So far as the divine program is concerned only the one man sinned, only the one man was sentenced to death and only the one man Christ Jesus needed to die for the redemption and the complete deliverance from death of the whole human family. Nevertheless the one sacrifice of Christ would be necessary for the delivery of *any* one man of the whole world, because all are imperfect and under the demands of Justice none can claim release from death. It follows then that our Lord, when he had ascended up on high, had in his hand a price sufficient to pay the penalty for any one member of the race or for all of them or for as many as he chose

to apply it for. He did choose, according to the Scriptures, to make application of that merit only in behalf of those who should believe during this age—the antitypical Atonement Day. As a consequence of that application in "our behalf" we who believe have been privileged to return to God's favor and to enjoy the opportunity of becoming joint-heirs with our Redeemer.

The divine purpose in the redemption provided was to bring a blessing to all the families of the earth—a release from sin and death conditions and a return to divine favor to all who would be obedient; hence our Lord's work did not end with the application of his merit to those who were accepted of the Father as members of his body. Rather the sacrifice was allowed to continue on a larger scale—a sacrificing of the church, the members of his Body being counted as a continuation and a completion of our Lord's own personal sacrifice. When all the members of this great mystical body shall have "suffered with him"—when he as the great antitypical High Priest shall have offered up not only himself but us, his adopted members, then justice will have all that it ever demanded and much more. It will have the one great valuable sacrifice of Jesus and additionally the sacrifice of his members—144,000 justified through faith in his blood, whose sacrifice the Apostle declares to be in God's sight "holy and acceptable."—Rom. 12:1.

Would it be right for justice to accept 144,001 sacrifices when only the one was really demanded? We answer, Yes. Justice is not hindered—divine justice would not be stopped from receiving all of those sacrifices in the manner arranged. Justice could have not demanded more, however, nor accepted less, than the one perfect life. We are to remember that none of these sacrifices was demanded nor compelled by justice—merely a high reward for faithfulness was held out for the time. Our Lord was attracted thereby and "For the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame." As a matter of fact the divine plan through him opened the door of opportunity to others who have *his spirit* (disposition) during this age, to a limited fore-ordained number, which we believe to be 144,000. Their sacrifice was not demanded. It was voluntary and because they saw riches of grace and divine rewards which they esteemed to be their privilege to attain. Thus in the divine plan the world has been redeemed much less directly than we may have imagined, but much to our advantage, in that it has permitted us to become members of the bride class, members of the body of the Great Mediator, whose work throughout the Millennial age will be that of intercessor and go-between and mediator between God and men—the world in general. We, who now come in under this arrangement as members of the body, members of the "Seed of Abraham," members of the Great Antitypical Mediator, Prophet, Priest, King, Judge, are as his members under his supervision yielding up our lives in sacrifice during this age, and these sacrificed lives counted in with his constitute the blood of The Christ, which seals the New Covenant between God and the world. That New Covenant will not be sealed until all the blood of the Great Mediator has been shed. Then Head and body, Bridegroom and bride, we shall be presented before the Father and the blood of the Great Christ, as shown in the types of Leviticus, will then avail for the cancellation of the world's sin, even as the blood of Jesus now avails for our sins.

Meantime in advance of the sealing of that New Covenant Jesus and all the members of his body are "able ministers

of the New Covenant"—qualified ministers or servants—qualified to offer the necessary sacrifice—qualified to represent God and to tell to those who have the ear to hear the terms and conditions of that New Covenant of the future and the terms and conditions by which we become its ministers or servants and ambassadors for God and of his righteousness, which the New Covenant will introduce to mankind in general.

THE LAST FIRST—THE FIRST LAST

Coming back then to the original question we remind all that the Apostle shows that "We are all sinners"—that "the whole world is guilty before God," not in the sense that each has been tried and sentenced, but in the sense that all have inherited weaknesses and imperfections which would prove them guilty and bring upon them condemnation if they were put upon trial at the present time. Hence, instead of putting mankind on trial, as Adam was on trial before the bar of divine justice, God has arranged the Millennial age as the period in which the whole world shall be instructed, enlightened, corrected in righteousness and helped out of their sins and death conditions back to perfection, if they will. During the Millennium none will be on trial before the bar of divine justice. Indeed, as the Apostle suggests, it would be "a fearful thing" for any to drop out of the hands of Christ into the hands of the living God, because the divine provision for mercy and forgiveness is all in Christ. Hence

there is no salvation through any other name nor in any other way than by faith in and obedience to the great Mediator.

But it is in no sense necessary that this work of reclaiming the race should begin in Adam—quite to the contrary, the last will be first and the first last, so far as the divine arrangement is revealed. Adam, who enjoyed 930 years of experience, will be amongst the last if not the very last to be awakened from the tomb and to be tested as respects his willingness hereafter to be in harmony with the divine program in every detail. Not until the close of the Millennial age will Adam and his race be turned over to the Father. They will then "fall into the hands of the living God" without injury because the Mediator will have previously brought them to full perfection of mind and body—all the unwilling and disobedient and refractory being destroyed in the second death throughout the Millennial years. But naturally and properly at the close of the Millennium the kingdom shall be delivered up to God, even the Father. (1 Cor. 15:23-27.) Then the first work of the Father with these will be to test their loyalty as he tested father Adam in the beginning. Whichever of these shall sin after having had the experiences of the fall and the recovery will not only be condemned to death, but that death will be a finality. "Christ dieth no more." No provision has been made but by the one Redemption and one Restitution.

WHAT THE WORD VOW SIGNIFIES

It seems evident that a few ordinarily bright brethren have missed their education as respects the meaning of the word "vow"; or else, that our great adversary, opposed to the vow recently suggested in these columns, is using every means to confuse their minds, to disorder their judgment in respect to it. The said few appear to be awfully distressed by the vow and protest vociferously against it, against those who take it, and against the Editor for advising it. Their arguments are amusing, ridiculous and self-contradictory; but with all their brightness these brethren fail to see this. We pray for them a still wider opening of the eyes of their understanding, and in harmony with our prayers we proceed to discuss this subject, condescending to details which should be quite unnecessary; our excuse is, love for the brethren, and a clear realization that they are taking a wrong stand, supporting a wrong standard, and overlooking the fact that there are but two Princes or Leaders—the Prince of Light and the Prince of Darkness.

The vow suggested had a small beginning, but the Lord's providence led up to its general presentation to the church and our advice that all of the consecrated of the Lord's people take the vow—not as a new consecration but as bringing their original consecration up-to-date—as drawing tighter the girdle of consecration which holds to us our bridal garment and "girds up the loins of our minds," making us the more ready and the more strong from day to day in the fight of this "evil day." It may be helpful to some to be informed regarding the leadings of the Lord in respect to this vow. Hence we will state the matter briefly:

Some of the dear friends naturally and properly are very jealous of the truth and of the influence and reputation of those who represent it—especially the "Pilgrims," all of whom should be noble characters, and, we believe, are such—of far higher than average standing amongst Christians and ministers. We may add here that we exercise a great deal of care in the selection of these representatives of the Society serving the Lord's work—that they shall be moral men, consecrated saints, humble, clear in the truth, and of some ability in its presentation.

The pilgrim service during the last year has been represented by some twenty-five men of this stamp, and our confidence in them is represented by our endorsement and appointment of them to the service of the truth. However, we received from dear Christian friends criticisms applying to several of these dear pilgrims, not criminal, not sinful, but suggestions that they should be warned to be still more discreet toward the opposite sex, more careful than other ministers, since the truth and its servants are looked upon most critically, often maliciously. These letters, received with appreciation, we acknowledged, assuring the dear friends that it is our desire that all who bear the vessels of the Lord's House in connection with the service of the present truth, should not only speak and think along the highest planes but in conduct also should be "blameless"; and that we were sure that no evil was in any way intended, and that our bringing the matter to the attention of the pilgrims would be all that was necessary.

The fact is that those who received the truth in the spirit of it feel a warmer affection for each other than could result from any earthly relationship. It is not our thought that this spiritual oneness is wrong or that it should be set aside or quenched. It is indeed the spirit of Christ in the members of his body. We do think, however, that outsiders cannot understand this, and hence that the deportment and language and letters between the friends should be so seasoned with grace and wisdom that our most critical opponents would pronounce them "blameless." Furthermore we do not forget that the Lord's people, "new creatures in Christ Jesus," have "this treasure in earthen vessels," all of which are more or less imperfect through the fall. We have learned that some are weaker in one respect and others in another and hence, as the Apostle says, "We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please ourselves." (Rom. 15:1.) Hence our true love for others of the Lord's people ought to produce in us great self-restraint and uprightness lest we injure the weaker, of whose weakness we properly may not know. These undisputed facts should appeal to all of the Lord's saints in favor of self-restraint to the last degree.

As an illustration of the unwisdom complained of we cite one instance which may be as instructive to others as it was to ourself. A noble brother in the truth came to us saying, "Brother Russell, do you approve of the pilgrims kissing the sisters? I was much shocked to see one kiss a sister." We replied, No, Brother! While we find no mention in the Scriptures that kissing would be a sin, we do feel that for the pilgrims to practice such familiarity would be to lower their influence and endanger the interests of the truth. Did you speak to the pilgrim on the subject according to Matt. 18:15? He answered, "I did do so, but thought that as the pilgrim represented the Society it was my duty also to mention the matter to you as its representative"—relating the circumstance. We replied, I assure you, dear Brother, that the pilgrim you name is a very honorable man, and the kiss was surely not thought of by him as anything either sinful or impure. But I am glad that you are so particular, and I am sure that when I call the matter to the pilgrim's attention he will fully agree to the unwisdom of the course, however pure his motives. The Brother replied, "Yes, the pilgrim told me that the sister was one with whom he had been very intimately acquainted for a long time, and that his kiss was merely a greeting. I accepted his statement of the matter, Brother Russell, though I cannot understand it, for I assure you that I could not have given the kiss without improper feeling."

That statement was a revelation. Our mental cogitation was, How differently people are constituted. One might kiss a thousand without an impure thought or sentiment; another would be injured by a single kiss. We realized, as never before, how careful the Lord's people should be to lift all of our standards high enough to protect the very weakest, and to avoid everything that might have even the appearance of evil. We saw at once how a kiss that to one person would be as innocent as the shaking of hands might to another be a very different matter. This thought helped us to appreciate why some regard kissing as representing an impurity, whereas

others, differently constituted, would never think of such a thing except by such a lesson as this. Another lesson we drew was on the danger of misjudging one another. "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged."

Not long after this, meditating on all these facts, and calling to mind as well that our own conduct had been evil-spoken of, we thought up the vow for ourself and for one pilgrim specially needing it, and later thought of its value for all of the dear pilgrims. Another matter which influenced us in the preparation of the vow was the general view the Lord seemed lately to have been giving us respecting the peculiar trials, difficulties, besetments of the last seven years of the harvest period and the accumulating evidences that during this time Satan and all of the fallen angels will be permitted of the Lord in various ways to assault the whole world along the lines of Spiritism, Hypnotism, Occultism, etc., the general tendency of all which will be to lead to gross immoralities. We said to ourself, Surely we are in the special time foretold by the Word of God as the "Hour of temptation," "That evil day," etc., in which, "if it were possible, the very elect would be deceived"; and in which surely "Every man's work shall be tried so as by fire." (1 Cor. 3:13.) The Spirit of the Lord said to us through these Scriptures, and this mental picture of things at the time before us, It will surely behoove every child of God, and especially every public minister of the truth, to look well to the straightness of his paths and to walk in extreme circumspection. It was under these influences that we prepared the vow, as representing a very high standard of Christian living.

We had it written out in duplicate, and sent copies to all the pilgrims just before our journey to Britain, at the time having no thought of publishing anything respecting it. Later on we reflected that if the dear friends who had written us in criticism of some of the brethren could know of the vow and perceive how the slightest indiscretion, either real or apparent, would be guarded against by it, they would have an increased confidence in every member of the pilgrim force. We concluded for this reason to publish the vow and to give the names of those who had made it their vow to the Lord.

Just at this time we received Brother Hollister's letter referring to a carelessness between brothers and sisters in their greeting, which was sometimes so genuine and hearty as to be liable to be misunderstood by others of the church and by the world. Believing that the time is ripe for such a stand and the exhibition of a high standard, we published that letter with our approval and comments as introductory to the submitting of the vow and the names of the pilgrims taking it. After the matter was in type, but before it went to press, we got a letter from a colporteur brother and church elder, who said he had seen a copy of the vow in possession of a pilgrim, told of his appreciation of it, and that he at once made it his own before the Lord. We took this as a hint from the Lord, for it appealed to our judgment as representing his will—then, on the proof-sheet we added the suggestion that all colporteurs take the vow and all elders and deacons of churches. A little later came the thought, "Are not all of the Lord's people representatives of God, who are offering sacrifices—his ambassadors and ministers of the truth? And would not this vow prove a blessing and assistance to all, male and female?" Our judgment of the Lord's Will confirmed the thought, and thus the matter reached you in the June 15th TOWER.

The suggestion was not that you take this vow to us or to each other, but that you make the vow to the Lord, and that we would be glad to know of the step having been taken and to have a word to that effect from any pleased to inform us. The promptness of the responses and the assurances from many of increased blessing in their hearts and nearness to the Lord have convinced us that the Lord guided in respect to the preparation and circulation of that vow. Likewise a small but vigorous opposition to the vow, and a desire to fight it and to hinder some from taking it, suggests to our minds that the adversary is displeased with the course we have taken and that he is more or less blinding and, we fear, stumbling a few and, to some extent, suggesting and putting before their minds light as darkness and darkness as light. Indications are that the adversary will make this a case of sifting amongst the consecrated. Of course none but the consecrated can take the vow, hence a considerable number in sympathy with it but not consecrated may be disinclined to take it; but we warn them that while it is entirely proper for them to count the cost and decide on their own course of action, they will, by opposing it, get under the wrong banner and in support of the wrong Prince and be thereby injured.

THE STANDARD DICTIONARY'S DEFINITION

To vow is (1) to *promise* solemnly; especially to promise

to God. (2) To *declare* with assurance or solemnity; to aver; to avow.

The noun vow is thus defined: (1) A solemn *promise* to God. (2) A solemn *engagement* to adopt a certain course in life, pursue some aim, observe some moral precept or surrender one's self to a higher life of holiness; (3) also a pledge of *faithfulness* as marriage vows; (4) a solemn and emphatic *affirmation*.

As showing the confusion of thought on the subject we remark that some have endeavored to set forth that a vow is an oath and hence that our Lord Jesus prohibited making of vows when he said, "Swear not at all." Nothing can be farther from the truth. In that very connection our Lord was saying, "Let your Yea be Yea; and your Nay, Nay; for whatever is more than these cometh of evil." A vow is merely a Yea or a positive affirmation. A vow is not to be sworn to, for that the Lord prohibits. The vows of his people are to be as sure and truthful as though backed by an oath.

Another brother writes us, "If the vow were published as a *resolution* I would have no objection to it whatever in any way, and would be most happy to be enrolled in the list of resolution-takers." The vow is a resolution, not to one's self, but to the Lord. Note in the above definitions the synonyms—promise, declare, engagement, affirmation. A vow is a covenant. But the term covenant is not as favorable and does not express the matter as thoroughly as the word vow; because the term covenant is generally used as respects a matter having two parts, a giving and a receiving, dependent one upon the other; as for instance, in business a firm covenants or contracts to ship goods of such a quality and kind at such a time, in consideration of such a price to be paid for them.

Thus, also, the New Covenant between God and men has requirements on both sides, and The Christ, the Mediator, stands good as the intermediate to guarantee both sides of that covenant. There is one covenant, however, which corresponds exactly to a vow, namely, the Abrahamic Covenant, because it is a one-sided covenant. In it God made all the promises and made no condition, and hence no mediator was needed for it. In a word God *vowed* that, in Abraham and through Abraham's seed all the families of the earth would ultimately receive a blessing. No conditions are mentioned. It is a definite agreement. In addition to the vow God bound it with an oath, which definitely shows that a vow and an oath are two separate and distinct things.

The vow which many of us have taken and which we earnestly recommend to all, is a statement to the Lord of our willingness and *determination by his assisting grace* to follow a certain course of conduct, which, we believe, will be pleasing to him and advantageous to ourselves and to others. Surely the eyes of misunderstanding which see everything amiss in such a course are crossed by prejudice or ignorance or some element of darkness.

THE WATCH TOWER IN OPPOSITION

Here we are met with the astounding proposition that ZION'S WATCH TOWER has always opposed vows. One dear Brother has sent us six pages of quotations, but his quotations are all wrong because misapplied. The WATCH TOWER never had a word to say against the making of vows to the Lord. On the contrary, it has urged that they be made, and has declared that none could expect to receive the holy Spirit and be begotten thereby to a new nature unless he first vowed to the Lord a full surrender and full submission of himself, "Even unto death." Similarly the Apostle Paul urged the same vow, saying, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." The Apostle did not mean that we were to go to heaven and there give our bodies to the Lord, but he did mean that by some *vows* we should consecrate our earthly talents, powers, privileges, opportunities to the service of the Lord. Does not the Apostle urge the baptismal vow and show its necessity, saying, "So many of you as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" (Rom. 6:3.) What is this but the urging of the vow, the consecration vow? When the Apostle wrote, "If we be dead with him we shall also live with him," and again, that he should "bring into captivity every thought of our minds in obedience to Christ," was he not in these and in all his various public writings urging the fulfilment of our consecration vows, our baptismal vows?

What we have opposed in the nature of vows are those which are the most common amongst men and amongst professing Christians—namely vows to one another. In these, we believe, there lurks a great danger to Christian liberty. Presbyterians vow to each other to support and uphold their profession of faith and church organization. Methodists do

similarly and so do all denominations and secret orders of all kinds. These vows are injurious because they are not on the proper basis. All our covenants or vows should be made with the Lord. Our responsibility should be realized to him and not to men. "Pay thy vows unto the Most High."—Psa. 50:14.

There is one exception to these vows made to our fellow-creatures which we have never opposed, but upheld, namely, the *marriage vow*, by which each member of a married couple binds himself for life to the other.

Following the custom of our Lord and the apostles throughout the New Testament we quote from the Old Testament Scriptures on the subject of vows. As the Prophet David frequently represented The Christ, Head and body, so his vows represented those of Christ and the church. In one sense our vows may be considered from two different standpoints: (1) That we will put off the old man with his affections and desires, and (2) that we will put on the new man, which is renewed in righteousness. We may divide this vow or covenant or engagement into several more; as the Apostle says, "Put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, strife; and put on all these: kindness, meekness, long-suffering, love."

Every spirit-begotten child of God has surely vowed all these vows and others, whether he thinks of them in this itemized form or not. We perhaps more frequently speak of the entire transaction as one—as our consecration vow, our baptismal vow; because this vow takes in and includes everything that we have and are or shall have or possess—even unto death. The vow of the Christian in response to the Apostle's appeal, "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service," is all-comprehensive. In it he gives away every right, every liberty, every choice, and agrees with the Lord that his own will shall be dead and the divine will accepted in every affair of life and in respect to all his words and thoughts and doings. Thus we see that a Christian, as the Apostle has expressed it, is a bond-slave in the most absolute sense. No slave could have less rights, less freedom, since these are pledged to the extent of ability to bring even the very thoughts of their hearts into conformity to the will of their Master.

In view of the foregoing, it can readily be seen that the vow we have suggested, if in line with this, is really a part of it and merely stated afresh for emphasis, to bring the matter up-to-date, and to impress it upon our minds. If it can be shown that the items recited are a "reasonable service," that the doing of them would glorify our Father and our Lord, that they would be helpful to others of the household of faith or to ourselves, then we are bound to take this vow—all consecrated Christians would be bound to take it, so soon as they should perceive in it the qualities specified. For such to fail to take it would be for them to fail to keep their baptismal vow. And they would be bound to announce the vow publicly if convinced that the announcement of it would be helpful to others or to themselves.

AN ANALYSIS OF THE VOW

Let us make no mistake. Let us not deceive ourselves nor others. If we have any objection to the Vow let us not deceive ourselves as to *what* it is and what it is not. It is a prime requisite of a Christian that he be honest, that he deceive not himself and that he understand that his Creator cannot be deceived. The vow naturally divides itself into several parts, which, for convenience, we will number, and as we read these let us jot down which of them we object to—which of them is in opposition to the Scriptures—which of them would be dishonorable to God or injurious to ourselves or to others.

(1) Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. May thy rule come into my heart more and more, and thy will be done in my mortal body. Relying on the assistance of thy promised grace to help in every time of need, through Jesus Christ our Lord, I register this Vow.

(2) Daily will I remember at the throne of heavenly grace the general interests of the harvest work, and particularly the share which I myself am privileged to enjoy in that work, and the dear co-laborers at the Bible House at Allegheny and everywhere.

(3) I vow to still more carefully, if possible, scrutinize my thoughts and words and doings, to the intent that I may be the better enabled to serve thee, and thy dear flock.

(4) I vow to thee that I will be on the alert to resist everything akin to Spiritism and Occultism, and that remembering that there are but the two masters, I shall resist these snares in all reasonable ways, as being of the adversary.

(5) I further vow that, with the exceptions below, I will at all times and in all places, conduct myself towards those of the opposite sex in private exactly as I would do with

them in public—in the presence of a congregation of the Lord's people.

(6) And so far as reasonably possible I will avoid being in the same room with any of the opposite sex alone, unless the door to the room stand wide open.

(7) Exceptions in the case of brethren: wife, children, mother and natural sisters. In the case of sisters: husband, children, father and natural brothers.

OTHER OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED

One brother says, "I cannot take that vow. I am afraid I cannot keep it." We ask which part of it could a consecrated child of God not keep, if he is keeping his baptismal vow and hopes to hear the Master say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Another says, "I do not need the vow." The dear brother who has this opinion is mistaken. He is the very one who does need it. The Apostle carries this thought when he says of himself, "When I am weak, then I am strong"; for by antithesis when one feels strong and self-confident and needing no assistance he is then weak. Indeed, we have come to the conclusion that nearly as many fail on their strong points as on their weak ones, because, less on guard in respect to them, they are the more easily entrapped by the adversary.

Another writes that we should not *force* the vow upon the church. We have not done so, nor shall we do so. We have neither authority nor wish to do so. A vow made under compulsion would not be of any advantage, but on the contrary, an injury. We have commended this vow because it is part and parcel of our original baptismal vow—a re-statement of it, brought up-to-date with a view of stirring our pure minds by way of remembrance. The fact that there is any opposition engendered by it is an evidence that some had forgotten their comprehensive baptismal vow. We have the Apostle's word as our justification for urging this vow, and in his language will say that "We beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."—Rom. 12:1.

If any Scripture can be quoted against the vow in any one of its seven items, we will be glad to have it brought to our attention. One brother quotes a Scripture against the vow and fails to see that it is in harmony with it and against him. It is Prov. 20:25. "It is a snare for a man to devour that which is holy, and after vows to make inquiry." The brother who offers this as an objection claims to have already made the all-comprehensive baptismal vow. He thus devoured that which is holy, and is *only now making inquiry about it*, and surprised to see that the portion we have suggested as bringing it up-to-date was not understood by him, not comprehended. He is at the present only making inquiry, only informing himself in respect to his original vow of twenty-five years ago. No wonder if this matter prove a snare to him, as the proverb says—not by setting him wrong and out of harmony with his original vow, but by showing that he is wrong and has been wrong and out of accord with it until now. It would be a blessing to that brother if he would make thorough inquiry now and register afresh this consecration vow. If he made the vow and now makes inquiry about it, and finds it greater and more comprehensive than he at first supposed, let him not break it, but thank God, and resolve in the language of the Psalmist, "I will pay my vows unto the Most High."—Psa. 50:14. Now a word to such, from the wise king. "When thou vowest a vow unto God defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools; pay that which thou hast vowed. Better it is that thou shouldst not vow than that thou shouldst vow and not pay."—Ecl. 5:4, 5.

LIFT UP A STANDARD FOR THE PEOPLE

In Isaiah's prophecy we read, "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him. And the Redeemer shall come to Zion and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord."—Isa. 59:19, 20.

The context, for instance verses 17, 18, distinctly describe the time in which we are living and the years of trouble before us; and in our judgment the Lord has guided, at this due time, to the lifting of this vow amongst his people as a high standard for them, for their protection.

Our 1909 motto will be, "My Help Cometh from the Lord." This help comes to us now; primarily through the death of our Lord; secondarily through our becoming his disciples and sharing his death. And this vow is emphasizing this covenant to death and drawing to our attention some of the snares of the adversary. It will surely prove a valuable aid to all who are seeking to make their calling and election sure.

We notice that this text is variously rendered in the different translations, but the one furnished in our Common Version seems to fit all the conditions better than any of the others. The stress of difference affects the word "standard." The Hebrew word is defined by Young's lexicon—"To cause to flee, lift up an ensign." Strong's lexicon amongst other definitions gives, "To be displayed, make to flee, put to flight, lift up a standard."

The Revised Version renders it, "For he shall come as a rushing stream which the breath of the Lord driveth."

Leeser's translation reads, "For there shall come distress like a stream which the spirit of the Lord urges forward."

Young's translation renders it, "When come in as a flood doth an adversary, the spirit of Jehovah hath raised an ensign against him."

On the whole we decidedly prefer the reading of our Common Version, and note its harmony with the statement of the Prophet a little further on, "Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people." (Isa. 62:10.) Whether these Scriptures refer to the Vow now lifted up as a standard amongst the consecrated, or whether they refer to something else, none can dispute the fact that the Vow represents a very *high standard* of Christian living, which few would have the courage to attack as in any sense of the word injurious.

We decidedly urge the Lord's people on to victory as overcomers of the world, the flesh and the adversary. Enrolled as soldiers of the cross we recognize this high standard as of the Lord's providence. Nevertheless, let not an unkind word or reflection be uttered against any who temporarily or permanently may be unable to see the standard or be fearful to accept it as a part of their vow to the Most High. It is not for us to judge one another in connection with the Vow or otherwise, but for us to seek to assist and encourage one another in every way possible. It is written, "The Lord will judge his people."

PUBLISHING THE NAMES OF VOWERS

A few have objected to the publication of the names of the vowers, but only one of these has notified us that he has taken the vow. True, we very rarely publish any names, but this is not because there would be anything wrong in our keeping, for instance, a list of those declaring their baptismal vows. On the contrary, it might frequently be a very convenient list to have. It, however, would not claim to rep-

resent all of God's people nor that all on the list would come off victorious. So with those who take this vow and whose names appear on our list. The name there will in no sense imply that the victory has been won, but merely that these persons have taken this solemn vow; and that all their church brethren and the world and their families may know just where they stand, and see this high standard they lift up, under the present conditions of distress, before themselves and each other and the people. The list, however, will not purport to be a list of the "little flock." Oh no! Far be it from us to draw the line or to judge our brethren.

Nothing in the Scriptures intimates that our vow to the Lord must be kept secret. Indeed our baptismal vow we are required to symbolize or profess publicly. To the contrary, also, David, in one of the Messianic Psalms in which he prophetically speaks for Christ, says, "I will declare thy name amongst my brethren. In the midst of the congregation will I praise thee," and adds, "My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him." (Psa. 22:25.) In Psalm 116 the prophet twice declares that his vows shall be made public, saying:

"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." And as though the vow referred to symbolized death to self and the world as well as to sin, the Prophet continues, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints"—his holy ones. (Psa. 116:14, 15-18.) Again he says, "In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me. Thy vows are upon me, O God: I will render praise unto thee. For thou hast delivered my soul from death; wilt thou not deliver my feet from falling?"—Psa. 56:11-13.

However, dear friends, in the interest of these brethren whom it would offend let us forego the publishing of these names, at least until the necessity for so doing is more apparent. Take the vow, solemnly, to the Lord, and live it every word and every day. It will surely draw you closer to the Lord to exercise such a scrutiny of every act and word and thought. It will help you to realize what it is to dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and under the shadow of the Almighty. No harm can come nigh that dwelling place.

Continue to advise us, if you please, when you take the vow. We will preserve an alphabetical list which may be of some use some time.

"WHAT SPIRIT YE ARE OF"

The number of the brethren who have expressed opposition to the vow as already stated is small, but they have ability and influence. The *virulence* of their opposition has amazed us. Never have we been more deeply stabbed and "wounded in the house of our friends"—by some whom we still esteem and love as dear brethren and who still declare their love for us.

One writes (A) that he perceives that the Editor has "a lying, evil spirit," because in the September 15th *TOWER* we said that the few brethren who had expressed to us their opposition to the vow were all married men, while he *thinks* that one unmarried man wrote in opposition to the vow. Our reply is, that we do not recall the letter; possibly it was couched in such terms that we did not consider it as *OPPOSITION TO THE VOW*, but merely a declaration of why the writer thought best not to make the vow his own. But in any event, suppose this brother were wholly right and we wholly in error, suppose we thus demonstrated that our memory is *not infallible*, would that prove that the Editor is obsessed of a lying devil? Are all people of defective memory possessed by lying devils? We never so thought, nor do we now. This brother objects, too, that the same article urges "If in your judgment no 'evil day,' no 'hour of temptation,' no 'strange work,' no 'strong delusion' is impending, you should be wise enough and kind enough not to oppose those who do so believe and who are getting ready for the same." This statement, he insists, is a further evidence that we have "a lying, evil spirit." He intimates that he does believe that serious trouble is impending. Alas! that our poor brains should become so confused. Let us take an illustration. Suppose a crowd of people on and close to a railroad track, and that some realized and others did not, that an express train was almost due. Suppose that one hearing the whistle and realizing the danger urged all to clear the track, and to go no closer than five feet to be out of danger. Suppose another like (A) took

offense at the announcement and claimed that it should not have been made. Surely the one giving the alarm would be justified in adopting our very words, "If in your judgment no train is approaching and there is no danger at hand justifying our warning and advice, you should be wise enough and kind enough not to hinder those who do so believe and who are striving to get out of danger."

Another dear brother (B), denouncing the Vow, tells us that he knows that it is of the devil, etc. He then tells us that he knows he is all right, is one of the elect soon to judge the world, and that he is conscious of the Lord's favor and blessing upon him now. Finally, he threatens us that if we do not recant and contradict what we have already set forth on the vow subject, he will do terrible things and teach us a lesson we will never forget.

We thanked the dear brother and expressed confidence in his conscientiousness, but declined to allow him to control either our conscience or the columns of the *WATCH TOWER*. We pointed out to him his boastful spirit and that he was attempting to judge us before the time, and without showing us any authority from God why we should accept his view of matters as God's view, and set aside our own convictions. We reminded him that he was derogating to himself the four-fold office of *accuser, judge, jury* and *executioner*, and that he would best go slowly lest lack of humility and lack of brotherly love should ultimately bar him from any share with those to whom the Lord will say, "Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."

We do not say that these brethren have ceased to believe with us, nor that they do not grasp the situation fully, though the latter seems the more generous explanation of their course. If this is not the true explanation of their opposition, pray what is? What feature of the Vow itself can they oppose?

Another (C) bitterly denounces not only the Vow but other things which do not *please him* in the conduct of the