

differences and these are to be published. I will get these and then you can see the two sides in contrast." "No," said the brother, "I do not care to read them." Later, when the reports were received and read by the brother in the truth, he said to the other, "John, here, read what Dr. Eaton says;

never mind what Bro. Russell says, since you are so opposed: just read Dr. Eaton's side." The brother read as requested and then could not restrain his curiosity respecting the other side. He read, and, being honest, was convinced and is now active like his brother in scattering the good tidings.

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## VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

### MORE MIRACLE WHEAT

Our notice of the "miracle wheat" grown in Virginia, the grower reports, has caused him lots of trouble answering letters and returning money sent for small samples. He has shown us representative stalks of the wheat and photos of its growing in the field, fully corroborating all that we have published respecting the same. But he refuses to sell any of it until he has secured a fair stock, which will be in a few years hence.

Meantime the matter has brought out the fact that others are also propagating "miracle wheat," as witnessed by the subjoined reports. We advise farmers to begin at once to inspect their wheat before cutting and cull out for seed the choicest, fullest heads or most "stooled." Our thought is that in this natural way God is preparing for the Millennium, when "the earth shall yield her increase."

### SEVEN-HEADED WHEAT DISCOVERED

W. W. Ward, of Dayton, Washington, has discovered a new variety of wheat that has seven distinct heads united to a common base. And each head is larger than the ordinary wheat. Ward figures that the new variety will yield as high as 280 bushels to the acre, with an average of 200 bushels.

Hundreds of farmers have visited the Ward ranch and are intensely interested in the new wheat. All have asked for a few pounds of the seed, but Ward is figuring upon further experiments and plans to plant all of this year's crop next season, enlarging his present area to about three acres.

Ward has been experimenting for five years to get a wheat that will yield bigger crops, but never expected anything like the seven-headed variety.—*Sioux City Tribune*.

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*Neither of the above notes relate to what is termed "Alaska" wheat grown in Idaho, which we understand had been repudiated by Government experts.*

### IS SURGERY A CURE FOR CRIME?

Is the modern criminal to be reformed by means of the surgeon's knife? Is our whole penal system—reformatories, jails, and asylums for criminal lunatics—to be abolished, while society depends for protection, and looks for the elevation to a higher moral standard of the thief and the murderer to a few inches of steel wielded by the hand of a strong-nerved genius of science?

Recent miracles of surgery, such as those performed by Dr. Bernard Hollander, who has recently claimed that criminals should be judged according to a medical standard, suggest that we are on the eve of a revolution in our treatment of the criminal and insane, and that in a few years a dozen cuts of the lancet will effect a greater change in the moral equipment of the Ishmaelites of society than years of confinement in a jail.

Look at the case of Holzay, otherwise known as "Black Bart," the terror of half-a-dozen states in America. No treasure on board a train was secure against his evil designs; no plans of the detectives were sufficient safeguard against his desperate courses. "Black Bart" stole and murdered with impunity; but in a slack moment he fell into the hands of the police and his criminal career was closed by a sentence of imprisonment for life. In a few weeks he was removed to the criminal lunatic asylum, and the prison surgeons, deliberating long and anxiously over his case, came to the conclusion that "Black Bart's" crimes were not so much the result of "cussedness" as a sheer inability to run in the straight and narrow path. His brain was affected by a tumor; remove the growth, they said, and it's a thousand chances to one that "Black Bart" will become a fairly decent member of society. The operation was performed, and in six weeks the nature of the once desperate criminal had completely changed. The knife, while removing the tumor, would seem to have removed his evil passions as well; his old blood-thirstiness had disappeared, and prison-wardens, who formerly hesitated to approach him unless in couples, found him as harmless as, and more tractable than, a child.

Not long since a Welsh railway porter fractured his skull by falling off a truck. He was trephined, and apparently got well, but always suffered from epileptic fits. His usual alertness deserted him, and instead of being a bright, intelligent

man, he became drowsy and listless, indifferent to all that was going on around him. In this condition he was taken to the Liverpool infirmary, where it was found that the old hole in the skull was an inch long, and that a flap of skin, including the old scar, was directly attached to the brain. What did the surgeons do? They scraped the folds of the brain clear of this skin, and placed between the brain and the bone a thin plate of gold in order to prevent them sticking together again. Over this the skin was neatly drawn and securely sewn. A week later the patient was sitting up in bed; in a month or less he was reading the newspapers, and taking a keen and intelligent interest in the busy world around him. The instruments of the surgeon had saved him from becoming a human log; they had brightened his brain, and sharpened his faculties as no treatment in an asylum could have done.

A somewhat similar case was that of Jay Lentz, employed as a foreman at the Great Western mines at Harmon, in Virginia. He was caught under a fall of slate, his skull was broken, and a piece of his brain was torn from the main structure. Of course, his mental condition immediately changed for the worse. The doctors, faced by a terrible problem, resolved on heroic measures. The shattered brain was neatly dressed. A healthy yearling calf was tied down, her skull cut away, and a lobe of the brain removed and fitted into the cavity of Lentz's head. Slow, but sure, was the miner's progress towards recovery. As his physical health improved his old-time intellectual brightness came back, until he was able to resume his ordinary occupation in life.

More marvelous still, however, is a case in which the surgeon's knife has been used to restore the moral faculties, with a boy as the subject. The boy is Carl Fredericks of Hoboken, whose brain is so peculiarly formed, say the doctors, that if left alone he would never do right. The growth of the brain matter has installed in him a tendency toward perpetual evil. Let us rid his skull of the excess, said the surgeons, and see if any moral improvement is visible. Certain parts of the brain, which were considered to cause the trouble, were cut away, and the effect was surprising. Carl is growing good; his wicked tendencies are gradually disappearing, and it is expected that in a few years he will have his full quota of moral faculties.—*London Exchange*.

### CHURCHES PLUNGING INTO HYPNOTISM

About a year ago, two ministers of New England decided to try methods analogous to those used by Spiritists, Eddyists, Mormons and Hypnotists for the cure of diseases. They met with a measure of success, as do the others. The news of their methods is spreading, and a prominent publishing firm, with a Methodist D. D. at its head, is now sending circular letters to ministers everywhere, advertising two new books which they publish, explaining how the work can be carried on by any preacher along hypnotic lines.

We print below extracts from a long article in the *Kansas City Star*, detailing the fact that Rev. A. T. Osbron of its city is endeavoring to use hypnotism to regain his hold upon his dwindling congregation of Methodists. We quote:

"It has been said of life insurance that 'You have to die to win.' Similarly the policy of the church has been to hold out promises of a happy reward to the faithful, but they had to die to get it.

"The reason Christian Science numbers its converts by the thousands while the orthodox church complains of a falling off in membership is this: Christian Science holds out the offer of help to the afflicted, rest to the weary and health, wealth and prosperity for all. Its helping hand is extended now. Its promise of happiness is in this life.

"The old church with its policy of 'suffer all manner of evil for great is your reward in heaven,' cannot compete with a creed which holds out such promises of immediate well-being.

"The Rev. Mr. Osbron believes that all Methodist ministers not only should preach the gospel, but should 'heal the sick' and comfort by the divine power in them. In his little church at 925 Newton avenue, Dr. Osbron has undertaken a movement portentous for the church and to humanity. It is a movement which its founder hopes will grow and encompass the earth. It is interesting to listen to the opinion of this prophet of the church that is to be.

"The fact that men care little about theory or doctrine," said Mr. Osbron, "explains why very sensible men become adherents to such unscientific and non-Christian organizations as the Spiritualist or Christian Science church. The truth is a large part of their membership is totally unfamiliar with the doctrines to which they have subscribed. Visible facts attracted them. They wanted results and that was all they cared for. Their interest was aroused by what the church did, not what it taught."

"No one can deny that in practice the Christian Scientists do a great deal of good—that they relieve pain and cure some diseases! These are indubitable facts."

"Many thousands there are who would gladly testify to the efficacy of their manner of treatment, and in the face of such a multitude of witnesses we can but hold our peace. True, it is urged that many of their patients die without medical aid. Just so do the patients of the doctors die in spite of their medicines."

"The orthodox church must utilize the marvelous healing powers of suggestive or psychic therapeutics. This power has been possessed by individuals from the earliest times. By its means the early church-men performed miracles of healing by touch. Of late it has been disregarded by the church and the attention of followers called only to the miracles of other days. Quacks and charlatans have seized upon the psychic power and used it for their personal aggrandizement. It is time for the church again to take up this, their allotted task, and obey the Scriptural injunction, 'heal the sick,' as a part of the church's ministrations to its followers."

"My method is in no sense that of the Christian Scientist. The Scientists deny the reality of pain, disease and sin. I believe they are very real. But I also know that much suffering can be relieved and many physical ills cured by suggestion and prayer."

"There are thousands wandering in the shadow of insanity who might be saved by proper suggestion. It is astonishing

to discover the number there are who are constantly harassed by fear in various forms. They screen these fears and fixed ideas from their friends, and suffer in silence until nervous breakdown, suicide or crime is the certain end. All these could be cured, criminal tendencies removed and the reform schools all but emptied by the proper use of hypnotic suggestion."

"The ministers' meeting of the Methodist church in Kansas City, after a discussion of a favorable character, appointed a commission consisting of the Rev. Ernest Claypool, the Rev. Daniel McGurk and the Rev. Arthur Barton, to keep in close touch with the movement, and to make an official report to the body on the first Monday of September next as to the class of work done."

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Let us not be misunderstood. We fully agree that the human mind can either greatly assist or hinder a disease or its cure. We advise all to mentally resist everything undesirable, mental and physical; and that God's children obey their Lord's advice and "cast all their care upon him," realizing that *fear* is a most dangerous thing, except the fear of displeasing God. But how sad it is to see professed ministers and professed people of God, rushing into Satan's trap, wholly negligent of and as above scoffing at the essence of the Master's teaching. He that saveth his life shall lose it and he that loseth his life for my sake and the Gospel's shall find it—preserve it unto life eternal. How remarkably few understand that the call of this Gospel age is "to suffer with Christ," and to "be dead with him" that we may by and by live and reign with him.

Let us, who are awake to the true situation act accordingly—avoiding Hypnotism, Spiritism and Occultism (demonism) in their every form of deception, and let us do all we reasonably can to spread a knowledge of the truth to all people, especially to Christians.

## VOW LETTERS NOT A FEW

Vow letters from individuals and classes continue to pour in upon the Editor. He is glad to have them and requests that you excuse the impossible pleasure of answering every one of these by letter. He thinks none the less of some who have "sat down and counted the cost" before taking the vow.

Some of the letters wish that the matter had been presented sooner, as it might have saved them some painful experiences. Others find it "just in time" to forewarn and forearm them. One colporteur reports that the first three parties canvassed one morning were Spiritualists. The thoughts presented in connection with the vow held him back, and that night he made the vow his own before the Lord.

So many as recognize it as the standard lifted up by the Lord (Isa. 59:19) for our help and for the assistance of others with whom we have influence—such of course will be prompt to take it and sure to keep it. Time will tell. Meantime those who have taken it relate that they experience fresh blessings and we rejoice with them.

"Offer unto God thy thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the Most High; and call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth!" Psa. 50:14-16 and see 19-21. We can spare room for only one letter at this time:

Beloved Pastor:—

I can only add multiplied emphasis to the many expressions of joy and gratitude already given by the friends respecting the vow and all the articles pertaining thereto, every word of which I have eagerly read and weighed and applied to myself.

Very humbly I registered my vow to the Lord, dear brother, not as one of those who had no special need of its protection, but as one who was in sore need. Reared in an exceedingly affectionate home and accustomed to excessive demonstration of love and affection, the breaking of the home ties when I entered the colporteur work brought me much loneliness which the adversary no doubt saw much sooner than I myself did and cunningly acted upon. My confidence in the Lord's people was unlimited—and not until recently have I seen the great danger confronting us all in this direction. The mistakes that I have been led into are painful memories, but I thank God have prepared me for his blessing. I am glad for the vow—I am desirous of all the blessing it can bring. I remember at his throne every day all who have taken it. May his grace be richly with us all.

With much love for you and deep appreciation of your faithful devotion to the Lord and careful attention to his flock, I am,

Yours in the hope of perfect love,

## WHAT CONSTITUTES A CHURCH

Since the appearance of the article, "The One True Church," we have received several communications inquiring as to the right or privilege of a portion of the congregation to split off and hold meetings by itself as a separate and distinct church. As already pointed out in the article referred to, our Lord's words inform us of his willingness to recognize any two or three of the faithful, consecrated ones when they meet together in his name, and that the presence of the Head with such members constitutes a church, in the Scriptural sense.

But while this is true it is also true that the teachings of our Lord and of his apostles and the practices of the early church all agree with the thought that the new commandment, "that ye love one another as I have loved you," implies such a close fellowship of spirit amongst all of the Lord's dear people as will lead them to desire to come together rather than to disintegrate into smaller groups. We should notice carefully the words, "As I have loved you";

that they signify a very deep, earnest love and not a mere tolerance. The Lord loved us to the extent of giving his life for us, and the Apostle points to him as our example and declares, "We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren." This is the love wherewith he loved us. We are to remember, too, that this is not a sectional or sectarian love for class or party in the church, but is for all, because they are his. True, it is not possible to love all to the same degree of appreciation, but all are to be loved to the degree of a willingness to lay down our lives for them; because even the humblest of the Lord's little ones has a claim on the noblest of them, for does he not belong to the same great army of the redeemed, enlisted under the captaincy of Immanuel in the fight against sin and with a covenant agreement with his Master to lay down his life in his service? How could we help but love those who have devoted their all to the same Master whom we serve—and the fact that the Master accepts of such and is not ashamed to call them

brethren is the best of reasons why we also should accept them and not be ashamed of them, but on the contrary love them and be glad to serve them, even to the extent of laying down hours or days of life itself in their assistance.

Everything connected with the Spirit of the Lord and the instructions of his Word seem to antagonize the thought of division amongst the members of his body. A beautiful illustration of this is found in the fact that the dear friends everywhere, as they grow in grace and knowledge, seem to become more and more imbued with the desire to come together—in the one-day conventions and still more so in the general conventions; and in these the thought is often expressed that our longings and fellowship for one another will not find complete satisfaction until we gather with our Lord and all his faithful in the general assembly of the first-born, "whose names are written in heaven."

We all remember the Apostle's arraignment of sectarianism; and it is well that we take note of the fact that he attributes it to a partisan spirit with which he had no sympathy and to which he refers as an evidence of carnality, fleshly-mindedness, indicating an immature development along spiritual lines. He says, "While one says I am of Paul, and another I am of Apollos, and another I am of Cephas (Peter), are ye not carnal? Is Christ divided?" (1 Cor. 3:3, 4.) He goes on to say that none of these redeemed us, but Christ alone, and that we are all baptized into his body and therefore are related to each other, because we are related to him our Head; and he proceeds to say that there should be no schism in the body; that is to say, no split, no division.

Whether we are conscious of it or not, dear friends, it is doubtless true that a spirit that favors a division of the class, where such a division would not be due to distance hindering a proper gathering at one place, must be a spirit of sectarianism or partisanship. Sometimes this is a result of a brother desiring to be leader and wishing for a fuller opportunity for the exercise of his talents as a servant of the church. At other times, as in the case the Apostle mentions, it is due to partisanship on the part of a portion of the church who are desirous of following leaders, even when the leaders themselves do not desire it, as in St. Paul's case cited. In any event it would do us good in this connection to scrutinize our own hearts individually rather than to judge one another in this matter. Quite possibly in some places where there is a disposition on the part of some to split off and hold separate meetings there may be some real cause or reason; but the better way would be to correct that difficulty and remain united. Unconsciously sometimes the Lord's people become too narrow and control church arrangements too much along the lines of the will of the majority, rather than endeavor to arrange such a programme as would as nearly as possible please, profit and happy all.

The Apostle's exhortation is that we "consider one another to provoke unto love and good works." This signifies not merely that we should consider the tastes and preferences of the better educated or the naturally more noble or rich or refined, but that we should seek to consider all the dear members of the Body. It is easy comparatively to love the refined, the educated and the well-developed spiritually, and to love these is in harmony with what our Lord suggests that even the Gentiles do, "If ye love them that love you what thank have ye? do not even the publicans and sinners the

same?" The brotherly love to which the Apostle refers, saying, "Hereby we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren"—this love is not merely the love of the refined and elegant and accomplished and noble-minded. Many people love those who have not passed from death unto life. But it becomes an evidence of our having passed from death unto life if we love the brethren, of whom the Apostle intimates that many are ignoble; yea, even saying that "God hath chosen the mean things of the world." It is when we come to the place of loving those of the brethren who are naturally mean that we may consider it an evidence of the new nature being in control of the mind. We love them not for their meanness, nor for their ignorance, nor for their stupidity, nor for their poverty, but because they are his and because all his are ours, because they are enlisted under the same banner in the same fight with ourselves; because the Father hath acknowledged them as his children in the begetting of his Spirit. These reasons call for our love, for our sympathy and our help one for another in climbing Zion's Hill.

Our Lord intimates that our love for him will be gauged by our love for the brethren, and the Apostle points out to us that as the Lord's compassion and grace are given to each of us in proportion to our needs, so our sympathy and love should be manifested to others according to their needs. To seek chiefly the company of those who are of our own plane of development, mental or spiritual, is to please ourselves, and the Apostle points out that we should love one another or serve one another and not please ourselves, pointing out further that even Christ pleased not himself. Furthermore he points out that as in our physical bodies we sometimes bestow more care upon a deformed hand or foot to cover the deformity than we do upon one that is natural, so we are to do in the body of Christ; those who are most in need of our sympathy and assistance and fellowship should receive it, that the whole body of Christ may be edified, built up and knit together in the bonds of love as the members of Christ under him who is the Head.

We need each member of the body, as the Apostle intimates, and as the trying times before us become more strenuous we all more and more need the actual coöperation and assistance and sympathy and love of each other. Let us, therefore, avoid schism as well as "ism" and let us have that spirit of oneness appropriate to the body, for we are all one in Christ Jesus and members one of another. Let us seek more and more to see eye to eye in all these matters.

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**Question.**—Is it proper to choose as an elder one who has not participated in symbolic water baptism?

**Answer.**—While we urge that all of the consecrated and all who profess faith in the ransom and a full consecration to the Lord be accounted and dealt with as brethren and members of the church, irrespective of their obedience to the water symbol, we would not think it either wise or in harmony with the Lord's teaching to select such a one to the eldership of the church. We could not consider such a one sound in "the faith once delivered to the saints." We could not consider him as well developed in the truth, even though we accept him as a brother. We could not, therefore, consider him a proper person to be specially chosen to instruct others respecting the divine plan, etc.

## "THE EVIL ONE TOUCHETH HIM NOT"

"We know that whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and the Evil One toucheth him not."—1 John 5:18.

This text is not a guarantee of eternal salvation to those begotten of the holy Spirit. It is not a guarantee of their salvation from trials, temptations, difficulties, etc., as some have seemed to suppose. It does signify, however, that those consecrated believers whom God has accepted and who have been begotten again to a newness of life, to a new nature, are under special divine supervision. They will not sin (wilfully) because their seed remaineth in them, the begetting power of the holy Spirit. This seed being in them, they cannot sin wilfully. If they should sin wilfully, it would imply that the holy seed, the begetting of the Lord's Spirit in them, had perished; that they were no longer new creatures in Christ Jesus, for whom old things had passed away and all things had become new. It would mean that they had turned again, as the dog to his vomit and as the sow to wallowing in the mire—to sympathy with sin and things contrary to the divine Word and its spirit.

The Apostle declared that our Lord Jesus, the first begotten of the Spirit, will keep all these younger brethren begotten of the Spirit; keep them from the touch of the evil

one, from the injury which Satan would otherwise do them. As we have already suggested, this does not mean that they will be kept from trials, from temptations of the adversary, for even our Lord was exposed to temptations from him; and these temptations, trials, oppositions, persecutions, we see to be necessary for our Christian character and for our development in our Redeemer's likeness of heart. The promise, therefore, signifies that in the midst of these temptations of the adversary the Lord provides his faithful with such protection, such defense, such assistance, as is not only necessary for them to come off victors but to keep them from yielding to temptation. It is in harmony with this that we are taught to pray, "Abandon us not in temptation, but deliver us from the evil one"—suffer him not to touch, to injure us, to overthrow us, to destroy us.

"God moves in a mysterious way,  
His wonders to perform."

While the Lord is abundantly able to work miracles for the protection of his faithful followers and for their de-

liverance from the evil one, and while we feel sure that if every other means failed, a miracle would be wrought in our interest, nevertheless we are not to anticipate that the Lord will use miracles, but are to expect that generally he will use means, and oftenest human instrumentalities, for the protection and deliverance of the members of his body, who abide in his love and are seeking to do those things pleasing to him.

#### "IF POSSIBLE THE VERY ELECT"

From the day of Pentecost until the present time the Lord's dear sheep have been beset by the same great adversary, and have had fiery trials, and have also had the protection of him that was begotten of God, the Lord Jesus, who is keeping the faithful from the power of the adversary. But the Scriptures unanimously point us to the end of this age as a time for special trial and testing, not only upon the world but also upon the church, for "judgment must begin at the house of God." It is respecting this coming time that the Apostle forewarns the church, saying, "Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand in the evil day." He implies that the evil day with which this age shall end will have the severest trials ever known to God's people, and that they will have the greatest need ever known for the armor of truth and righteousness. The same fact is referred to by our Lord in addressing the sixth phase of the church, the church of Philadelphia. He says, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation which is coming upon the whole world to try them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth." (Rev. 3:10.) The seventh stage of the church, the Laodicean, will come into that hour of temptation; and we believe that it is already in part upon us. What we would have all see is that the time ahead of us must be very peculiarly a time of trial and testing, else it would not be so strikingly referred to in the Word of God. Nor do we wish to arouse the fears of the Lord's people, to terrify. Our thought is rather to offer the consolation which will keep them in perfect peace; as it is written, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee." The Lord's promises, exceeding great and precious, are enlarged before our minds at the same time, really in advance of the coming of the hour of temptation and trial, so that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished, thoroughly prepared.

Our Lord's words respecting the temptations and trials of the church assure us that this class shall have nothing to fear, that they will be kept, that it will not be possible for them to be tempted, for with every temptation the Lord will provide a way of escape. Let us remember in this connection the Apostle Paul's words respecting our day and its trials, "God will send them strong delusions that they may believe a lie, because they did not have pleasure in the truth." (2 Thess. 2:11.) What we do desire is that each consecrated child of God may see the way of escape which God has provided and may use the same, and thus be in line with the Lord's provision and amongst those shielded ones, the very elect—"called, chosen, faithful."—Rev. 17:14.

#### THE WAY OF ESCAPE

If it be conceded that we are down very close to the hour of temptation, when the evil one will be permitted to bring extraordinary delusions and trials to bear upon the world and the nominal church, then we are in the time when we ought to be looking about us to see what way of escape the Lord has provided for us. We believe that many of our readers will agree with us that the Lord's special provision for keeping us from the power of the evil one is the present truth, which he has supplied largely through the WATCH TOWER publications. If any one is disposed to controvert this point, we shall not dispute it, but be glad if he has received more efficient assistance from other quarters, glad if by any means the Lord is upholding him, strengthening and arming him for the trials and besetments just before us.

But whatever the channel of divine blessing by which the Lord would keep his own secure and restful in the coming time of stress, we may be assured that our personal coöperation is necessary to our deliverance. "Keep yourselves in the love of God" (Jude 21) was never a more necessary command to the followers of Jesus than at present; and we may expect that the temptation of this hour will be considerably along that line of abiding in God's love. This in turn will imply a love for the brethren; as the Apostle has suggested, "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (1 John 4:20.) Indeed, the intimation clearly is that "The love of many shall wax cold." (Matt. 24:12.) A cooling of our love toward God will mean a loss of our desire to

please him in our own thoughts and words and doings, which will include a cooling of our love for his service in the dissemination of the Gospel message and the gathering and feeding of the household of faith. Various things will conspire to this end—the love of money, the love of pleasure, the love of self, the love of earthly things in general, all of which were consecrated, devoted, before we received the spirit of adoption. If our love grows cold it will determine that we are not such as would be worthy to associate with our Redeemer in his kingdom glory.

In no way will this loss of the "love divine, all love excelling," be more manifest than in respect to our sentiments and conduct toward the fellow-members of the body of Christ. The Apostle tells us of what our attitude of mind toward these should be, namely, that as Christ loved the church and laid down his life on our behalf, we ought also to love the brethren so that we would be willing to lay down our lives on their behalf, in their interest. The love that would give up life itself for the brethren may certainly be expected to sacrifice smaller things in their interest. And indeed such are the tests which the Lord permits, declaring that he who is faithful in that which is least will be faithful also in much. It is therefore for us to see, to note, to criticise whether or not we have this love for the brethren which the Lord declares he will accept as love for himself, and without which we cannot be his disciples; for this was the new commandment which he gave to us, saying, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you."—John 15:12.

#### LOVING THE MEAN THINGS

It would indeed be easy to love the brethren and to lay down our lives for them if they were all like our dear Master and exemplar; but they are not. The inspired Apostle tells us that amongst the brethren are not many noble, not many great, not many wise, not many learned, not many rich. Agair he says that God hath chosen the mean things of the world. Are we astonished at this? Does it seem like a reflection on the church of Christ? Do we ask why divine grace has passed by some of the noblest of our race and accepted some of the meanest to discipleship? The answer of our Lord is, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." The explanation is that many of the great, rich, learned, noble, have not sufficient humility to receive the divine message in the proper manner. They realize themselves to be superior to the majority and think it but just to have this acknowledgment; and, failing to see the divine arrangement, they assure themselves that if anybody will be saved it will be themselves, for they are the finer and nobler specimens of the race. They see not that God looketh upon the heart instead of upon the outward man, and that however weak and ignoble and fallen a person, his heart, his will may be thoroughly turned into harmony with God and to the service of righteousness. They fail to see that in God's sight such a meek and quiet spirit, such a humble dependence upon the Redeemer for salvation, such a faithful looking to the Lord for grace to help in every time of need, is much more pleasing in the divine sight than is the more proud attitude of the nobler ones; and that such humble, trustful, appreciative, faithful ones the Lord has designed shall be participants with Christ in his excellent glory, not because of the perfection of their flesh, but because of the perfection of their hearts, their wills, which continually strive to bring every thought and word and deed into harmony with the divine will.

Now then, we may see why the Lord enjoined upon us that we should love one another, and rather implied that it would be a difficult matter to do so at all times, to make allowances for the weaknesses of the flesh and the imperfections of judgment in one another. And this is exactly what the Apostle John declares, saying, "We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." (1 John 3:14.) Thus he intimates that a love of the brethren will be so difficult a matter as to constitute an absolute proof to us that we have passed from death unto life, from the death state in Adam, and have become new creatures in Christ.

It is easy enough to love some of the brethren. We are apt to love those who are about on our own plane and of our own style and liking; but the Lord anticipated this and said, "If ye love them that love you, what thank have ye? [What proof have you that you have passed from death unto life?] Do not the publicans and sinners the same?" (Luke 6:32.) It is easy enough to love some of the refined or wealthy or naturally noble or the educated, those who are on our own level or a little above, as respects earthly things. But this does not fill the Lord's requirement. We are to

love one another *as* he has loved us. (John 13:34.) He commends his love to us in that it is to each according to his needs. The more noble, the less of the Lord's grace is sufficient for them; the more degraded, the more of the Lord's grace is necessary and will be supplied. Thus we are to love the brethren; for those who are less noble, yea, those whom the Apostle declares are amongst the mean things of this world from the world's view-point, will need our love the more because of a natural depravity and weakness and imperfection. And if we love as Christ loved, we shall be glad to give our lives to each and for each according to the needs of each, laying down our lives for the brethren in moments or hours or as each may need our help. Ah, what a new, what a different view is this of the love of the brethren! The practice of it would cut off some of our special fellowships with those who need our assistance little, and would transfer our fellowship and sacrifice of time to those of the brethren who need it more. And what a blessing, what an uplifting would come to some of the meaner ones, and what a blessing from the Lord would come more and more into our own hearts as we become more and more copies of him in thought and in deed!

We have already pointed out that the time of trouble coming upon the world will be a result of the loss of love and the outworking of selfishness—no peace to him that goes out nor to him that comes in, for every man's hand shall be against his neighbor—for himself. This signifies almost a complete loss of confidence throughout the world. Shall we not suppose reasonably that this trial is the one which will begin at the house of God? May we not reasonably conclude then that the trial which will come upon the church will be the same kind; namely, a testing of our love for the

brethren and of our applications of the principles which the Lord has laid down for our dealings with the brethren? We believe that this is so, and that the Lord will judge his people along this line of love, which is the law of the new nature and the fulfilling of all law. Whoever lacks the spirit of love will possess correspondingly the spirit of selfishness, the spirit of the adversary, the spirit of ambition, of pride, of anger and malice, and hatred and strife against all those who oppose or even seem to oppose his interests. Let us remember that such sentiments even in the heart, though unexpressed, are most dangerous to the new nature. Those who have such sentiments in their hearts are surely very close to the point where the adversary would be able to touch them, influence them, injure them, bring them under his power, and very close to the place where the Lord would be willing to reject them from discipleship and to allow the adversary to have them; even as in Judas' case, to whom the Lord said, "What thou doest, do quickly."

But let us, on the other hand, make use of the various blessings and instructions which the Lord has given us; let us put on the whole armor of God; let us make our own the various truths which the Lord has put into our hands: let us apply them, put them on as an armor; let us be strong in the Lord, in the power, the armament which he supplies in his Word, and let us see to it that the spirit actuating us is that of love, which will be ready to sacrifice everything for the fellow-members and to count it all joy thus to lay down our lives for the brethren. Let us remember that not only is there a special blessing to those who shall assist the brethren, even the weakest of them, but that there is a special threat against those who shall harm or stumble or injure even the least of the Lord's little ones!

## PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM

Our Dear Brother Russell:—

In a discourse on the "Parable of the Sower" (commonly so designated), as recorded in the 13th chapter of Matthew, a dear brother in the truth, an elder, by the way, of another local ecclesia, recently gave utterance to the following explanation or rather application, briefly summarized thus:

"This parable divides mankind into four different classes. the wayside soil representing the children of disobedience (Eph. 2:2), the rocky ground representing all the incapables, including all heathens, idiots, etc., the thorny ground representing all the consecrated believers who fail to carry out their consecration vow, thus bringing no fruit to perfection, and go into the second death, and the fourth class representing all of the Lord's people."

The writer's mind may be somewhat unduly balanced and his vision considerably beclouded, hindering him from receiving the force of the above application; but it does appear to me with an irresistible force of persuasion that the brother mentioned has taken by far too wide a scope, not by any means intended by the Master. From previous studies along these lines I would not understand that it would be your presentation of the matter, nor that it would be in harmony with the plan in general, wherefore I place myself as an inquirer, earnestly desirous of understanding it correctly. The force of the lesson, it appears to my mind, is almost entirely lost if we venture to apply it to the world at large, so much the more as the Master in his explanation of it very plainly and most emphatically asserts and reasserts that it applies exclusively to those who hear the word of the kingdom as presented by himself, the Master Sower, the same being carried on through the instrumentalities of his chosen servants, the twelve apostles. "When any one *heareth* the word of the Kingdom, etc., this is he that received seed by the wayside; he that received seed into stony places is he that *heareth* the word; he that received seed into thorny ground is he that *heareth* the word; he that received seed into good ground is he that *heareth* the word . . ." From this it appears evident that the fourfold division does not in any sense of the word apply to the world of mankind at large which collectively are called "children of disobedience" or "children of wrath," but only to a certain limited class of all people, nations and tongues, first Jews and then Gentiles. Surely this would exclude from the four-fold division of the parable all the heathens who have not even heard the name of the King; it would equally exclude all deprived of reasoning abilities, the idiots, infants, etc.; and furthermore it would exclude from the category the great majority of so-called Christendom, whose hearing faculties have been greatly neutralized by the antichristian systems of error, strong de-

lusions in every conceivable form. Thus the four-fold division merely applies to a limited number, viz., those who hear the Gospel in its purity and not a perverted so-called Gospel. In other words it would comprise those only who by the Apostle Paul are designated the "honored" class, honored to hear the Gospel, whoever or wherever they be, or however they receive it.

To the mind of the inquirer, even the majority of those who read the Bible do not hear the word of the kingdom, because their minds are warped, twisted, prejudiced and beclouded, as was the case with the majority of the nation to whom as a servant the King first came. Before coming into present truth the writer of these lines had never heard the Word of the kingdom, though he had made the Bible his special life study. Without going into any details whatever as far as the parable is concerned, thus briefly I submit to you the two views, both of which cannot be correct or in full harmony with the plan.

In this same connection I shall take the liberty to trespass upon your valuable time, dear Pastor, in presenting to you another question, of less import perhaps, but of great interest, closely related to the one mentioned above. It refers more particularly to the "Parable of the Wheat and Tares," immediately following the other parable. These two obscure presentations of the kingdom from different viewpoints being explained by the Master, conveys to the mind of the disciple, the learner, quite a few foundational truths, and consequently I have made the same a matter of profound and reverent study.

While recognizing that the true wheat wherever found is acceptable to the Lord, and that in this harvest he will so supervise the issues of the work so that all the wheat will be garnered, nevertheless it appears to me that the world at large does not constitute the wheat-field, but only a portion of it. By reading the Acts of the Apostles, which constitutes a history of the sowing time of the present age about to close, we are naturally forced to the conclusion that the Lord had a definite choice in the matter as a part in his election or selection of the little flock, and that he outlined for his wheat-field mainly the nations of Europe, original and transplanted. I understand that North America, Africa, Australia, etc., are mainly transplantations of the various nations of Europe, and of a comparatively recent date. St. Paul, who was one of the most prominent sowers under the directions of and in harmony with the Chief Sower, carrying on what Jesus *began* both to teach and to do (Acts 1:1), was very explicitly directed to take his course toward Europe, and the Macedonian cry was irresistible when he was in doubt in taking the last step and would have preferred to take another course. Pressing onward toward the northwest he reached



the most influential cities and the best seaports, by means of which the Gospel was carried to all the civilized world of that time until finally the Lord directed him to the imperial city of Rome, though he was conducted thither in a different way than he might have preferred if he had had the choice in the matter. Indications are strongly in favor of the view that he reached as far as Spain. However that may be, we know that it was his intention, and we do know that at the end of his active career he says that the Gospel had been preached under the whole heavens, evidently meaning the whole civilized world, residing around the Mediterranean Sea, and though this would not exclude a number of Asiatic provinces and the upper coast of Africa, it is a matter of history that since then Europe has been the great centre of ecclesiastical activity—the wheat-field in which shortly after the enemy sowed the tares of error. Neither at that time nor since has the Gospel of the kingdom been generally sent to the aborigines of Africa, South America or Asia. Fragments of Truth at most have reached these benighted but ransomed people, but it does not on that account seem correct to say that they are included in the Lord's wheat-field mentioned in the parable. As a farmer may not despise the wheat that is found fruitbearing outside the regular wheat-field, espe-

cially if the latter is almost entirely overgrown by tares, necessitating that the ears of wheat be picked out one by one; so the Lord's people, the saints, whether picked from amongst the tare-field of Christendom or from amongst benighted heathenism are just as precious in his sight. But in view of the facts as recorded on the pages of prophecy and history, would it not be perfectly correct to say that the wheat-field is somewhat limited in its dimensions, and certainly does not include the whole planet?

If the inquirer be incorrect he will be greatly indebted to you, Brother Russell, for putting him right, as you have done and are still doing in so many other perplexing questions.

Furthermore, I am also writing you on behalf of the little class in this place whom I have the sweet privilege of serving in my humble capacity, and if the above suggestions, presented to you by way of inquiry, appeal to you as sufficiently important for other classes kindly give it room in ZION'S WATCH TOWER.

Apologizing for the length of the questions, and anticipating your kind favors in this as in all other directions, I am,

Your fellow servant in the truth, very cordially and respectfully,

L. JOSEPH LARSON,—Wis.

## SAUL AND DAVID IN REVIEW

2 Samuel 5:12.—SEPTEMBER 20.

*Golden Text*—"And David perceived that the Lord had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for his people Israel's sake."

Of the two men in review Saul certainly had the more favorable opportunities at the beginning of his life. Nature seemed to have so specially fitted him for the office of king that when he was brought to the attention of the people, they, recognizing these natural traits, received him without hesitation. For a little while, he walked in humility, carefully seeking to do the Lord's will, but not having fully submitted himself, it was not long until there was a combination of his own will mixing with that of the Lord. The result was disobedience, failure, a troubled mind growingly perverse almost to the point of insanity, and finally an ignominious death. The flaw in Saul's character was his lack of a full consecration to the Lord, his maintaining a certain amount of self-will. This seemed to have been the difficulty. A similar difficulty affects all who fail to make their calling and election sure. Whether they go into the second death or the great company, the fault of the failure lies in neglect to surrender fully to the Lord every interest of life and to accept in faith his leadings, his providences in all the affairs of life, seeking to do his will and ignoring—mortifying—self.

David's character was in sharp contrast to that of Saul. Less favorably circumstanced at the beginning of his career, not so tall and commanding in appearance, probably of a less wealthy family, and possibly with no better mental endowment by birth, David's life and its results are in sharp contrast to those of Saul. Look wherever we will in his checkered career, we see courage and determination exercised along right lines, proper lines. He was not a wild animal hunter, but to protect the flock he slew the lion and the bear. He was not a pugilist nor a gladiator; yet at the proper moment he was ready to risk his life for the defense of his people. He appreciated highly the honor that had been conferred upon him in his anointing for the kingship, yet he held this with modesty—never boasted of it and never rashly attempted to hasten the divine programme. He endured patiently the opposition of the king, yet treated the members of the royal family with profoundest respect; and finally, instead of thrusting himself on the nation as king and demanding his acceptance, he still waited patiently the Lord's time. One of the results of studying the lives of great and good men is in seeing the way in which they were able to make the world better.

"Lives of great men all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime,  
And, departing, leave behind us,  
Footprints on the sands of time."

Many of those who have risen to prominence in the world have left no footprints that we can see; but when the Lord sets great examples before us, he shows us the footprints, and how some lead downward and others upward. Saul was of the former class, David of the latter. The important point to be noticed by us all is how much these footprints diverge, that we may avoid the one and profit by the other. The secret of David's success was not the mere fixity of his purpose, but additionally the fact that his purpose was

kept fully in accord with the divine will. Even in telling to King Saul the story of his conflict with the lion and the bear, he gave glory to God as having delivered them into his hands. And so throughout his entire career. We notice this same desire, to give God the glory of his successes, and to realize that whatever failures there were in his life were either his own weaknesses or divine blessings in disguise. Thus we see David's whole existence exemplifying the words of holy writ—"In all thy ways acknowledge him," "and he shall give thee the desire of thine heart."

### VALUE IN HIGH IDEALS

As we look about us in the world, and in the nominal church, we see vast numbers of mankind without any ideals, without any ambition. Alas, poor things! How can they ever have any pleasure or reach any noble goal when they see none? Looking again, we perceive some with only mean and groveling ambitions, worse than none. Poor creatures! Born in sin, shapen in iniquity, and perhaps reared in unfavorable environments, they are seriously handicapped in comparison with some others of the fallen race, less depraved and more favored. Looking again, we see a third class with noble worldly ambitions, seeking for wealth, influence, power, with a desire to use these honorably, nobly, not to the injury of their fellow-creatures but to some extent the opposite. These are to be congratulated as having better motives in life than the first two classes. They were possibly better born and possibly had better environment.

We look again and find a fourth class, whose eyes have by the grace of God been lifted from earthly things to the heavenly. To these, "Old things have passed away and all things have become new." The vision of heavenly joy, heavenly fellowship, heavenly service, has so transformed their minds that, although their flesh may still be weak, nevertheless they overcome by the new mind. This is the class which the earth could never satisfy. A new standard of values has come to them; and they both feel and know that the things of this life are "not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." They find these things in comparison but loss and dross. This is the class which the Lord has under his special care and instruction. Because they have made their consecration to him, he is showing them something of the height and depth, the length and breadth of the "deep things" of God. Thus he is giving to them, through his knowledge and grace, a power divine, which is working in them both to will and to do his good pleasure. The secret of their attainment of this favored position is that, having heard of the grace of God, their hearts responded. They gave themselves to the Lord and the work of grace progressing in them is his work. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works."—Eph. 2:10; Jas. 1:8.

### A DOUBLE-MINDED MAN IS UNSTABLE

But now again we must recognize a division; for "they are not all Israelites who are of Israel." Some of this fourth class are more responsible and some less responsible

as to the things which the Lord has shown them respecting his character and his plan. Some take a less positive stand and seek to gain the things of this world, its honor, as well as the honor of God and the world to come. In doing this, they are not heeding the words of the Master, who assures all his disciples that such a course would mean failure, that they would neither please the world nor would they succeed in pleasing the Lord. Such may eventually be brought to life eternal, but they are not the wise virgins. They will not reign in the Millennial kingdom. The Lord is seeking those who worship him with all their hearts, with all their souls, with all their strength, and with all their minds. These whole-souled ones are the class the Lord is specially seeking as the queen of the Millennial kingdom, the bride, the Lamb's wife, and joint-heirs with him. He has already foreordained that only such may be members of the royal family and partakers of the divine nature, saying, "Whom he did fore-know, he did also predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." To these he will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them, because they walk uprightly. Their hearts are upright, and their intentions are loyal to God and to his laws of justice and love. Let us get fixed in our minds the peculiar quality of this overcoming class, which is to constitute the kingdom as Christ's joint-heirs, that they must be loyal to God, consecrated, determined, and full of faith and trust.

These qualities cannot be expected to come to us instantaneously. Rather they are the gradual growth and development of the new mind but the principle must be in the heart before development can be made along these lines—the principle of loyalty and determination. The little word "will" has its very important place, then, in the Christian's character. He must be a willer, and the will must be rightly directed into full harmony with that of God.

#### CARVING OUT THE IDEAL

We said a moment ago that a high and good ideal is proper, is necessary, in every successful life. But to have the ideal will amount to nothing unless we are patient in its development. It is said of the great sculptor, Michael Angelo, that looking upon a block of soiled marble he began work upon it with hammer and chisel, apparently recklessly knocking off great blocks and pieces here and there. When asked what he was doing, he said, "I see an angel here and must get him out." He had the ideal in his mind, then laboring strenuously for the attainment of it, sculptured the angel out of the block of marble. So it must be with every successful life. We must have the ideal. We must see the angel. Then we must labor for its attainment, carefully, patiently, and prayerfully. The ideal set before the Christian is not only angelic, it is more; it is divine. Nothing less can be made out of the Apostle's words, God hath "given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature."

The same thought is elsewhere presented by St. John. Now are we the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear how great we shall be made, what glory and honor shall be ours, but the Apostle assures us, "We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

If then we are to be made like him by the "change" of the "first resurrection," if we are to see him as he is, then we may apply to ourselves the glorious things of the Lord and his excellency, respecting which the Apostle says, "Him hath God highly exalted and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth;" and again, "He has ascended far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named." If we shall be like him and share his glory, then all this glory belongs to the glorious ideal which God himself has presented to our gaze. Who with such in view would not be willing indeed to submit himself to the blows of the Lord! Who would not be willing to endure the necessary chiselings and polishings! Who would not be willing to submit himself to tribulation, knowing that "Tribulation worketh patience, and patience, experience, and experience, hope"! These things shed abroad in our hearts make us neither barren nor unfruitful in respect to the knowledge of God, but obtain for us an abundant entrance into his everlasting kingdom, in association with him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood.

#### THE LORD HAD ESTABLISHED HIM

Our Golden Text is quite in line with what we have just received, and shows us afresh the secret of David's successes and the line along which we also should be exercised in developing character which will be pleasing to the Lord. To some in David's place the thought would have been, "The Lord is very partial and has simply elected me to be the recipient of his favors. He cares more for me than for any other person in the nation." With this thought would have come a measure of vanity and pride which would have been very injurious to David (and to all others). These might also have said, "The Lord has seen that I am the fittest person in all this nation to be its ruler; and any person who does not fully agree with this sentiment is out of accord with the Lord and should have my frown and disapproval." Had David taken a position such as this it would have worked out a wrong character in him; and such a position taken by others would likewise work injuriously. It makes them boastful, arrogant, unloving, and unfits them for proper service to the Lord.

David's thought on the subject was the proper one. He perceived that the Lord had established him king over Israel and that he had *exalted him king for his people Israel's sake*. So, too, we should remember that God has a purpose in the selection or election of the church. As the Apostle says, "We are chosen for a purpose." God's purpose is a kingdom which shall bless the world. And he has many others, angels and men, whom he could have chosen for this great purpose, and by his providence could have moulded and fashioned them for the accomplishment of his will. But by his mercy he has chosen "not many wise, not many noble, not many mighty," but "the weak things of this world" for the carrying out of his plans. Let this thought keep us very humble, very near to the Lord. Let us strive to learn the lessons necessary to fit and prepare us for the ruling, judging and uplifting "all the families of the earth."

## HELL HATH ENLARGED HERSELF

Isa. 5:11-23.—SEPTEMBER 27.

Golden Text—"Wine is a mocker."—Prov. 20:1

The lesson committee assigned this as a temperance lesson: and undoubtedly it has in it a warning against intoxication. Nevertheless in our judgment, the context being considered, other matters are more reprehended in the lesson than intemperance. Undoubtedly there would be "woe to them that rise up early in the morning that they may follow strong drink; that tarry late into the night, till wine inflame them." However, they would be only moderate drinkers evidently who would, beginning so early, only by night become inflamed or drunken. We certainly can heartily endorse the thought that any indulgence of alcoholic spirits is dangerous—that intemperance lies at the foundation of many woes of life, sapping the manhood, the vigor, and undermining the moral sense and general character. We rejoice that the eyes of men's understanding are opening to more proper appreciation of the importance of this evil and that great good is resulting, not only to individuals, but to communities. Since the exhilarating effects of alcohol evidently deceive many, we think it well here to introduce a clipping which bears directly upon the subject.

#### "ALCOHOL OUT OF THE RACE"

"The contestants in the Marathon Race, which is run on April 19 from Ashland to Boston, twenty-five miles, were

notified this year in the following terms: 'Alcohol in any form is positively forbidden before, during and immediately after the race. It never does good, and usually does harm. Disregard of the foregoing shall be considered sufficient grounds for disqualification by the physician in charge.'

"In previous Marathon races some men who had become fagged had resorted to alcohol and other stimulants, and some of them fell unconscious soon after taking the stimulants. This year the six prominent Boston physicians who examined the one hundred and twenty-four men entered—one hundred and three of whom started and seventy-five finished—stated that the condition of the men was far superior to that of the previous year. So far as can be learned, no alcohol or drugs were used. No runner collapsed, and the record of physical endurance in this, the greatest race in America, if not in the world, is a wonderful one. The twenty-five consecutive miles, up hill and down, were run in an average of less than six minutes each, which is only a minute and a half slower than the majority of mile races on the best cindered tracks. Previous Marathon records were smashed, because the men depended on long and careful training rather than on stimulants. Alcohol was ruled out of the race, as it will be out of every contest of brawn or brains."

## SCOPE OF OUR LESSON

The chapter of which our lesson is a part commences with a parable in which our Lord represents Palestine as his vineyard and the Jews as the choice vine of his planting, from which he would look for much fruitage of a choice quality. Instead it brought forth worthless grapes. Hence through the Prophet and parable he declares that having done everything reasonable and proper for the fruit, he would now take away its hedging and allow it to be trodden down by the wild beasts and to lie waste. (Vs. 1-7.) This parable our Lord almost duplicated and we may understand therefore that while it may have had some application to Isaiah's time as the period of 70 years desolation, nevertheless really the fulfilment on a still larger scale took place at the time of our Lord's first advent, when, because of their wrong condition of heart and rejection of him, he declared their house left desolate, and, as the Apostle says, "Wrath is come upon them to the uttermost." Verses 24 to 30 continue this thought and show the mighty power which caused the fall of the Jewish polity.

The intervening verses, namely, from the 8th to the 23rd, treat of the reasons why the Lord was displeased with them and rejected them.

(1) Their selfishness was foremost amongst their sins—the desire to join house to house, farm to farm—to become rich was put as the most prominent sin because that desire leads to other sin. As the Apostle suggests, "The love of money [wealth] is the root of all evil." The result of this was shown to be a land scarcity as respects the poor, and the Lord's resolution that he would punish such selfishness so that the homes would become desolate, empty, and the mansions uninhabited and the fields unfruitful, so that the practice of iniquity, injustice, lovelessness, spell "failure" in the end.

(2) Next comes the verse 11 of our lesson, in which the Lord reprehends strong drink, the inflaming influence of wine, and the music and feasting indulged in by the wealthy who added house to house and field to field. It is evident that the wealthy consume considerable liquor and often without becoming seriously intoxicated, but no doubt the liquor has its influence in helping them promote selfish propositions, which disregard the interests of others, so that sometimes iniquities are hatched into activity which in sober sense would not have been countenanced. This is the essence of the Lord's complaint—"They regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands." Money-making, feasting, music absorb the attention of the great and influential, which means the disregard of the more important things of the divine plan—the things to which typical Israel, as well as the things to which Spiritual Israel during this Gospel age, have been called.

(3) The result of all this was that the masses, lacking the proper influence from their more talented leaders, became expatriated—separated from the hopes and ambitions which were Israel's as a nation—the poor lost the ideals necessary to their progress in a good way and instead got wrong ideals along the line of selfishness, pride, worldliness—ideals which they would have longed to follow had they possessed the talents and ability. Thus the wrong influence of those intoxicated with the love of money and of pleasure not only affected themselves, but the whole people of Israel. Correspondingly in spiritual Israel we find similar conditions.

Verse 13 points out the effects of the wrong course upon the people, as seen from the divine standpoint. The Israelites had practically become the slaves of their brethren, the rich. They were in practical captivity through a lack of knowledge. The most honorable of them were famished from lack of proper ideals and nourishment from the prophecies of the Lord in instructions of his Word, and the whole multitude was parched with thirst, lacking vigor, vitality and energy as respects the Lord's great purposes, to which he had called them to be his special people. Similar conditions apply now to Spiritual Israel—Christendom. The greatest minds of the world have become absorbed in wealth and pleasure-getting, and direful have been the results upon the masses of Christendom. The people find themselves really starving, hungry and thirsty. They have not satisfied their cravings from an earthly standpoint, because under present conditions this is impossible, and as for spiritual food and drink these have been taken away by the evolutions of the higher critics, who plainly tell the people that the Word of God is not the bread of truth, but poisonous food—error. As a result the masses of Christendom today, while prosperous outwardly as never before, are not really contented, but hungry for wealth and pleasure, and especially for happiness, which they will never find in the direction in which they are seeking it.

## HELL HAS OPENED HER MOUTH

The word "hell" in verse 14 is sheol in the Hebrew and signifies the grave, the tomb, the abyss—oblivion. To the Israelites this may have meant that because of the wretched condition of the poor classes and the accumulation of lands, etc., in the hands of the wealthy, there was a great increase of mortality, of the death rate. But the application to spiritual Israel may be a spiritual one, a reference to the fact that the spiritual hopes and ambitions of many are going down into oblivion—that faith is perishing among the people. How true this is! The Prophet says that thousands shall fall to one who stands. Oblivion is rapidly swallowing up the multitude, including also those who have once rejoiced in faith. The mean man is brought down and the great is humbled, and also the lofty—the proud. The full scope of this judgment of the Lord on Christendom is not yet manifest, but in the end the Lord of hosts shall be exalted and honored in respect to the judgment he will bring upon the people and the righteousness he will manifest. Then the gentle lambs will feed in the pastures which he will provide and the wastes which the profligate had taken possession of as their own shall be turned over to others whom they would not recognize.

## DRAW INIQUITY WITH FALSEHOOD

Another statement of the evils which caused the overthrow of typical Israel is shown in verse 18. A special wound had come upon the influential ones who had been disposed to use falsehood as cords in carrying forward their inequitable schemes. It may be safely said that falsehood is the outgrowth of selfishness and that nearly all the lying that is done in the world is in its interest to accomplish iniquity. The Prophet's words are, "Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity." These are represented as scoffing at the second coming of Messiah. Inflamed with the wine of Babylon and with their love of money and pleasure they disbelieve the glorious promises of Messiah and his kingdom and say, "Let him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it; and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come that we may know it." In other words they claim to be in full accord with the Lord, to be perfectly ready for his kingdom if he had one and if it ever will come. They claim to be wise and call those who trust in the Word of the Lord fools and tell them that if they had the knowledge of the Higher Critics they would no longer trust to the Bible.

## CALL EVIL GOOD AND GOOD EVIL

Continuing the picture the Lord declares that there will come woe to them because they have called the evil things which they practice good, and because the good things, truth and equity, they have treated lightly and spoken of as evil—nonsensical. They, Higher Critics, call darkness light, and the light of truth they call darkness. They put the bitter of error instead of the sweet of truth. This will mean to them very shortly trouble. The Lord continuing says that "woe will come unto them because they are so wise in their own eyes and prudent in their own sight." They have a wisdom and prudence which is of the earth earthy—sensual, devilish. They neglect the wisdom which comes from above, which is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits." They are mighty to drink the wine of Babylon, intoxicating from the dark ages—they can swallow these doctrines and not be intoxicated by them as are the masses. They are men of strength and can drink mingled strong drink—strong doctrines.

These strong doctrines may perplex the masses of spiritual Israel, but these strong men have a way of taking all the creeds, all the doctrines, and mingling them together, declaring their full harmony and that separately and as a whole they are splendid. Thus at this present time they are making a union of all the different creeds and saying that any strong-minded person should be able to drink all these creeds without injury. The Prophet says that these are they "which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him." If, for instance, a professed servant of God shall declare that he disbelieves practically all the teaching of God's Word, they stand ready to justify him in his wickedness, if he claims the right still to continue to pose as a servant of God. Why? For a reward. That they may in so doing justify their own belief and that they may maintain their standing and honor of men in silence and pose as strong-minded men, able to drink much strong drink. They are ready, also, to take away the righteousness of the righteous, to subdue those who speak the Truth, to slander them, to say all manner of evil against them falsely. Why? They do this also for a reward. Because they desire to be on the popular side and to retain the rewards which are accorded such.