

merely imputing to us the merit, or that which corresponds to the endorsement of our contract with the heavenly Father, if we desire to enter into such a contract.

THE WORLD WILL RETAIN THE EARTHLY LIFE-RIGHTS PURCHASED FOR THEM

Coming back to the statement made foregoing, that this merit is to be given on behalf of the world, we should qualify it and say that the merit is not to be given for the whole world, but merely, as the Scriptures outline, "for all the people." "The people," however, are not the entire world, but all who will come into covenant relationship with God during the period of the Great Mediatorial kingdom. These are the only people for whom the merit will be applied. Whoever will reject this opportunity and refuse to become one of the people, rejects all the opportunities that are to be granted and does not, therefore, receive restitution to human life. Such are not made perfect. They do not get human rights at all. They will receive an awakening from death, but this will not be restitution. This will be merely the first step from which they may, if they choose, take the further steps leading to the restitution

blessings. "It will come to pass that the soul that will not obey" that Great Mediator, that Great Prophet, Priest and King, the great "Prophet like unto Moses raised up from amongst your brethren"—of which Jesus is the Head and the church of this Gospel age are his members—"the soul that will not obey that Prophet shall be destroyed from amongst the people."—Acts 3:19-21.

This is in harmony with the Scripture to the effect that "he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him," continues on him; he never gets out from under the wrath of God. He had the opportunity; he was brought to a knowledge of the truth; he was brought to the place where it was his privilege to come under the arrangement of the New Covenant blessings which will be extended to all through Israel. But if he fails to make use of that opportunity and to become one of God's people, then he does not get out from under the wrath at all. He dies under the original wrath of God and without going to the end of the Millennial age—without becoming one of the restored ones.

LETTERS RE VOLUNTEER WORK

DEAR FRIENDS:—

I happened to come across one of your tracts for April, 1909, and was intensely interested in the article, "Where Are the Dead?" It set me to thinking and to reading the Bible as I never did before. Finally I got my husband to read the tract and he said he would like to hear that man preach. That was a great deal for him to say, for he has no use for churches and preachers in general. He is a good man indeed; as he often says, his life is superior to that of many church members, some of whom go to church just for style, and through habit and because their forefathers did. He says he would like to have you send your paper and he would read the sermon every Sunday, which he thinks would be better than going to church.

I am thankful to God that my husband is at last interested in the things of the future. His dear, sainted sister once said to him that he was too good not to obtain heaven and that she would pray for him constantly. What he wants and I want is the truth—not the varied opinions of men, and I know we can get it by searching the Scriptures. He is now even reading the Bible, which he says he never did before. As for me, I have always been a regular attendant at church, being a member of the Presbyterian church, as are all of my folks. As to having the holy Spirit really within me, I know I have not. I don't think I ever grasped the fundamental truth as yet. I have always believed that our beloved dead were in heaven, but as you say they are not judged yet, and how can they be there? Please send your paper to us. I understand it is twelve cents, but if it is more I will send it to you.

Yours very truly for the truth,

MRS. C. H. FULLER,—Oregon.

DEAR SIR:—

Please send me the PEOPLES PULPIT. I have just been handed a copy of "Where Are the Dead?" I have read it and have become very much interested in your good work. Please send me a copy of the "Thief in Paradise." Find enclosed 12 cents for a year's subscription.

Yours truly, MRS. IDA ZIMMERMAN,—Missouri.

GENTLEMEN:—

A copy of the PEOPLES PULPIT was handed to me last night. I cannot tell you in writing how I enjoyed reading it. Will you kindly forward me the sermons, "Where Are the Dead?" "Thieves in Paradise," and "The Rich Man in Hell." Would

also like to receive the six series of "Studies in the Scriptures," as it has not been my good fortune to receive them. Will send 12 cents in the near future for PEOPLES PULPIT. May God prosper you.

Very respectfully yours,

C. LAWLER,—N. Y.

DEA SIRS:—

I found advertisement copy of PEOPLES PULPIT in our letter box. I would like to have some of the books you speak of. I will subscribe for your paper later. I should like to know if you believe Calvinism to be true. Hoping to hear from you soon, I am,

Truly yours,

MRS. FRAYER,—N. J.

DEAR FRIENDS:—

I was handed one of your papers, PEOPLES PULPIT, which I prize very much for its explanations of the Scripture. Please find enclosed 12 cents for one year's subscription.

Yours very truly,

THOS. H. HARRIS,—Can.

GENTLEMEN:—

Your monthly paper, bearing the name PEOPLES PULPIT, came into my hands Sunday morning. I read it through carefully, as it treated of a subject that must greatly interest all thoughtful people. I should like very much to read the subjects enclosed. Please find enclosed 12 cents to pay for subscription.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. DORCAS CURNOW,—Cal.

DOCTOR EDGAR PASSED BEYOND

By cable we learn that Brother John Edgar underwent a surgical operation which has resulted in his death. We trust for him that he has passed beyond the Second Vail and is now with the Master in glory. He was a dear, humble, faithful brother, whom we greatly loved. His dear family have our sympathy, but we know that they sorrow not as others who have no such hopes as those which buoy us up. The cablegram says that he passed away peacefully, a grand witness to the truth. He fought a good fight. He kept the faith. He surely finished his work. We hope for him a crown.

BROTHER RUSSELL'S FOREIGN TOUR REPORT

SECTION III.

Sunday morning, May 15, we met with the London friends in what is known as the "Whitefield Tabernacle." The present structure was built on the spot where the original Whitefield Tabernacle stood, and what is reputed to be Whitefield's old pulpit is there. We occupied it on the occasion mentioned and talked to the friends of the London Church. Our text was, "Gather together my saints unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." We emphasized the fact that we are not to be gathered to human teachers, nor into sects,

and parties, and denominations. Our gathering of ourselves and our assistance to others is to be into membership in the body of Christ, the church of the living God whose names are written in heaven. Saints only are to be gathered. Others may be attracted to some extent and remain for some time in fellowship with the brethren, the truth and the Lord; but ultimately persecution or ambition, or something else, will separate from the Lord and from those in accord with him, all who are not holy, saintly, fully consecrated.

We specially emphasized that all properly drawn and called

and united to the Lord would come into this fellowship "by sacrifice." Not only would the sacrifice of Christ be the basis of their acceptance with God, but they themselves would enter into covenant relationship with God, by sacrifice. We pointed out that this covenant relationship began upon their turning from sin and seeking the Lord. We endeavored also to point out that justification to life was not obtainable until after Christ's sacrifice and ascension on high. We noted the fact that those called during this age are merely such as desire fellowship with God to the degree of being willing to forego and sacrifice earthly interests, aims, ambitions and hopes, to be with Christ partakers of heavenly things. We urged all, in the language of the Apostle, to make their calling and election sure—to "present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God." We had a very enjoyable session and at its close greeted many of the friends. The attendance was about one thousand, and represented not merely the City of London and suburbs, but many were present from a considerable distance, from Manchester, Bristol, Glasgow, etc.

In the afternoon, Brother John Edgar, M.D., of Glasgow, addressed the friends in the Tabernacle on the subject, "Our Oneness in Christ." We did not have the pleasure of hearing him, but through others understood that it was a very earnest and profitable discourse.

THE LATER PENTECOST

The evening session was in the world-famous "Royal Albert Hall." The attendance was estimated at six thousand. It was an exceptionally intelligent audience; far above the average in this respect, and in years and in religious appearance. We had excellent attention, our topic being, "The Later Pentecost." We endeavored to show that the times of restitution of all things will be the later Pentecost, in which God will pour out his spirit upon all flesh. But we need not detail the discourse since it is already in the hands of such as desire it, through the newspapers.

On Monday there were a number of baptisms symbolized at two different baptistries; we did not learn the number who thus symbolized. In the afternoon at the Tabernacle we had a question meeting. The attendance was about 800. The questions propounded evidenced thoughtful study on the part of the friends, and we trust that the answers were helpful to them. Many of the questions appertained to the subjects which have recently been so interesting to us,—respecting the Advocate, Mediator, ransom-price, vitalizing our justification, etc.

Our evening service beginning at 6:30 o'clock was a Love Feast—one of the most enjoyable that we have ever participated in. We gave a talk, taking for our subject a little souvenir, which we proffered to all attending the convention. Indeed, we made similar offers to all the convention gatherings during our tour, as we had already done in America, and we expect to continue the practice all the year. The souvenir is not of great intrinsic value, and yet it is priceless; it is not for sale, and is given in this manner only as a convention souvenir. It is a book-mark made of thin celluloid, cut in the shape of a heart. On the one side is a wreath of forget-me-nots, which suggests that the conventions and the subjects there discussed, and all the dear friends there met in fellowship, are long to be remembered. On the heart below the forget-me-nots is the text, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the Sons of God." These beautiful words should be fixed in our memories, and should have a weighty influence with us, encouraging us in our fellowship with the Father, with the Lord Jesus, and with each other. They should remind us of the exceeding great and precious promises of the Lord's Word, and of the glories in reservation for those who love him, and who attest their love by proper zeal, and thus show themselves copies of their Redeemer.

Turning the book-mark over, the inside of the heart has a grapevine in the center which spreads around the top of the heart, with larger and smaller clusters of grapes. This reminds us of our Lord's words, "I am the vine and ye are the branches—herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit"—fruits of the Spirit. In the center of the heart is a medallion picture of the Lord, about the size of a finger nail. It is traditionally the oldest likeness of the Master. Some time ago an emerald stone was found in Constantinople amongst the effects of the Emperors. In it was etched an intaglio likeness of Jesus. The tradition attached to it is that it was executed in the time of Tiberius Cæsar and sent to him as a present. Whether this legend be true or not, the likeness is probably the oldest picture of our Lord in the world. Later on the intaglio was presented to the Papal collection at Rome, and what we have reproduced is from a photograph of it. We elaborate this little scrap of history, realizing that it will enhance the value of the memento in the minds of all who love the Lord, and who long to see his

face, not in the flesh; but as the Apostle explains, when "changed," we shall be made like him, and see him as he is—rather than as he was.

KEEP THY HEART, DILIGENTLY

Underneath the likeness of Jesus is the text, "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." This text we endeavored especially to emphasize as the great lesson of our lives. We pointed out that to all who have made consecration, and whose consecration the Lord has accepted, there is a test or decision. Begotten of the holy Spirit to the spirit nature, the issues are life eternal on the spirit plane, or death eternal. To those who have given up the human nature in consecration, and whose sacrifice God has accepted through the merit of our Advocate, there is no prospect of restitution. Such have received by faith one justification to life through the merit of Jesus' sacrifice, and it is not the divine purpose to give more than one justification to life to anybody. Whoever therefore receives this justification and fails to use it to the attainment of eternal life will find, as the Apostle declares, that "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins"; he has had his share in the one sacrifice. Hence in a very pronounced sense the issues of life are before all the spirit begotten.

Another thought is that amongst those who will attain to the eternal life to which they are begotten of the Spirit, there will be two classes—a "little flock" of Priests, and a great company of Levites. The priesthood are to have spirit life on the highest plane, the divine nature, while the other overcoming ones of the church are to attain life as spirit beings on a lower plane, like unto the angels. Hence, in this sense the spirit begotten household of faith have before them two issues of life. We exhorted all to lay aside every weight and every besetting sin, that by the grace of God we may make our calling and election sure to the highest position—to which we have been called—to membership in the body of Christ—to membership in his bride—to membership in the royal priesthood.

We sought also to impress the force of the words, "Keep thy heart with all diligence." We are not to think of God as keeping our hearts, and we are not to pray to him to do for us what he instructs us to do for ourselves. To keep our hearts means to watch carefully the loyalty of our hearts to the Lord, to his brethren, to his truth—to watch that we do not stray from our consecration vow—that we do not become selfish, vainglorious, haughty, worldly. Our position in the universe is unique. We are not of the world, but have stepped out from it, under the Lord's calling, drawing, invitation—to joint heirship with his Son.

LOYALTY TO GOD THE TEST

In our covenant with our Lord, we have agreed to give up our earthly rights and privileges and to accept heartily, cheerfully, whatever this may imply in the way of self-sacrifice and earthly losses. Our test, therefore, as new creatures is whether or not we will maintain this spirit of loyalty, and devotion, and sacrifice, faithfully, through all kinds of trials and testings. If so we will be copies of our dear Redeemer, and just such as the Father desires shall be associated with him in his kingdom of glory and the work of the future. If we fail to display our loyalty, we are failing to make our calling and election sure. Every yielding to selfish inclinations signifies a backward step, a repudiation of our covenant of sacrifice. Every victory over self, and sin, and error, signifies a step forward, a demonstration of the spirit which God will approve, a demonstration that we are of the kind who will be counted worthy to become joint-heirs with his only begotten Son, our Redeemer.

We urged therefore that every attention be given to heart-searching, heart-keeping. We reminded the friends of the words of the Apostle, "Keep yourselves in the love of God," and that we keep ourselves in God's love by keeping our hearts. We reminded them also that we ought to keep our flesh—our bodies—under or in subjection to the new mind. Nevertheless the Lord's testing of us will be along the line of heart devotion, and not along the line of our fleshly imperfections. He knows in advance that according to the flesh there is none righteous, no not one. It is the loyal heart that he is seeking, and our partial victories over the flesh are merely attestations to our Lord of our loving zeal, and of our desire to be all that he would have us be.

Following this parting exhortation, we had a love feast; the elders of the London congregation ranged themselves on either side of us. While the singing of hymns progressed, the congregation of about 1,100 filed past shaking hands with the representatives of the Society and of the London congregation. It was a blessed season of fellowship, and was evidently greatly enjoyed by all. If there were exceptions we did not note them. This feature of the service concluded the Whitsuntide London convention for 1910.

GLASGOW—DUNDEE—EDINBURGH

The night express brought us to Glasgow, Tuesday morning early—not too early, however, for our dear Glasgow friends. About thirty-five of them met us at the railway station with cordial greetings. Doctor Edgar took us off to his home, where we were greatly refreshed, not only with natural food, but by spiritual fellowship. The City Hall had been secured for both the afternoon and evening meetings. In the afternoon the congregation consisted, as you may suppose, of the interested only, the number being estimated at 375. We had close attention while we endeavored to portray what constitutes covenant-relationship with God, and how the church attains to this in this age; and how differently the world will be privileged to attain to it in the Millennium.

We saw that Adam in his original purity and perfection was recognized of God as a son, and hence in covenant-relationship with him in the same sense as are the holy angels—in the sense of having full divine fellowship and divine assurance of everlasting life on condition of continued obedience. We perceived how the fall destroyed that covenant-relationship and placed Adam and his race in the position of aliens, sinners, condemned by the divine law to death. We saw how Abel, Enoch, Abraham and others because of their faith and obedience were restored to covenant-relationship with God to the extent of having divine friendship and fellowship, but not to the extent of being restored to perfection and eternal life and sonship. At very most they could be "friends of God" and have the prospect of "a better resurrection" than the remainder of the world on this account. We hearkened to the Apostle's words to this effect, assuring us that "They had this testimony that they pleased God," but nevertheless, "that they, without us (the church) could not be made perfect"; because, God had provided some better thing for us—admitting us, through Christ, to sonship on the spirit plane.

We perceived that this manifestation of divine grace toward us was not necessarily on account of our greater saintliness, nor on account of our greater faith; but because we live in the "acceptable time." God can now accept such as sons, to glory and joint-heirship with Jesus, on the basis of his being their Advocate, and making good the imperfections of their offering, by the imputation of his own merit. Thus "we are accepted in the Beloved," and heirs to "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept through the power of God." On the other hand, we noted that the promises of the Old Testament to the ancient worthies are earthly promises, not heavenly, and will be realized only after the Christ, Head and body, shall have been glorified on the spirit plane.

OUR JUSTIFICATION TO LIFE

Thus we distinguished between Abraham's justification by faith to a fellowship with God, as a "friend," waiting for the completion of his justification—to life, at the hands of the Redeemer—and in contradistinction, our own complete and actual justification to life and our own begetting of the holy Spirit as sons, "new creatures," joint-heirs with our Savior. We thus perceived that we not only have a faith-fellowship with God, but also "access into this grace wherein we now stand, rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God." (Romans 5:1, 2) We rejoice in the fact that we are already sons of God without rebuke, though it doth not yet appear how great, how wonderful we shall be after our glorious "change," which will make us like our Redeemer and enable us to see him as he is, and to share his glory, in the kingdom which flesh and blood cannot inherit.

Abraham drew nigh to God by faith without an Advocate or Mediator, except prospectively. We perceived that had he had an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, Abraham might indeed have been introduced at once to the Father and become a son of God on the same terms by which we enjoy our privilege of sonship, through Jesus as our Advocate.

We noted the difference between an Advocate and a Mediator—that an Advocate stands alongside of, as a representative, as a mouthpiece, as an assistant, so that those he represents may through him come at once into relationship with the Father. On the contrary, a Mediator stands between two who are at variance, until such time as he shall accomplish his work as a mediator and bring them fully into accord. We saw that this would be the work of the great Mediator, The Christ, during the Millennium. The Anointed of God, Head and body, the royal priesthood, will for a thousand years occupy the position of Mediator between God and men—between God and the world.

He will make satisfaction to divine justice by presenting his blood—the merit of his sacrifice—as a corresponding price for the sins of the whole world. This presentation will be made as soon as his elect church shall be completed and with him in glory. By virtue of that application of the merit of his own sacrifice, the whole world will be turned over to The Christ of God and "he will take to himself his great power and reign."

The turning over to him of the dominion of the earth by the Father will be in acknowledgment of his having paid the ransom-price over to justice for Adam and all of his race—"for the sins of the whole world." When justice accepts of Christ's atonement "for all the people," the formal transfer of the kingdoms of this world will take place, and God will put all things in subjection, under his feet.

Then for a thousand years Christ's Mediatorial kingdom will put down all insubordination and destroy every foe of righteousness and truth that will not submit; the last enemy that will be destroyed is death. Simultaneously with the overthrow of sin and its power in mankind will come the uplifting of man mentally, morally and physically for a thousand years (up, up, up to all that was lost in Eden), the redemption price of whom was secured at Calvary by our Lord's faithful sacrifice of himself. Those who will refuse to obey that great Prophet, Priest, King, Mediator, like unto Moses, the typical mediator of the Law Covenant, will be destroyed from amongst the people in the second death.—Acts 3:19-23.

NEW COVENANT TO BE MADE WITH MEDIATOR

At the end of the Mediatorial kingdom the whole world will have reached human perfection and be quite competent to keep every requirement of the divine law. Then the world will be turned over to the Father by the Mediator, who will then step out from between God and men, and thus bring God and humanity together in covenant-relationship. Whoever of mankind will then prove his loyalty to God may enjoy the divinely provided life in fellowship and blessing forever. During the Millennium the world will not be in covenant-relationship with God except in and through the Mediator. All their blessing will come through him, and their approach to the Father and all their worship will be through him. In other words, the New Covenant with Israel will be made not with them directly, but with their Mediator, and he will stand between them and God until they are perfected by restitution, ready to be received as sons of God, in covenant-relationship with the Father, at the conclusion of the Millennium.

We contrasted for a while this delay in the world's coming into personal covenant-relationship with the Father for a thousand years, under the Mediator, with the instantaneous work which the Redeemer effects for his church, his members, not as their Mediator, but as their Advocate. He introduces us and brings us at once to the Father through the imputation of his own merit to our sacrifices. He thus makes our "sacrifices holy and acceptable to God," permitting their divine acceptance as such, and the consequent immediate begetting of the sacrificers by the holy Spirit to sonship, to covenant-relationship, as "new creatures in Christ."

The evening service was for the public, our topic being, "The Overthrow of Satan's Empire," which we treated in our usual manner. The attendance present was estimated at 3,300—certainly a very large showing for a week-night. We greatly enjoyed our Glasgow visit, and with deep appreciation of the manifestations of loyalty to the Lord and to his truth, we left the friends for our next appointment, at Dundee. Quite a number accompanied us to the railway station, and some went on with us.

SECURING AND GIVING THE RANSOM-PRICE

We had two very interesting meetings at Dundee, both quite in contrast to those of our previous visit to the same place seven years ago. The class and the interest had in the meantime grown very encouragingly. The afternoon we spent with the interested who assembled to the number of about 175. Here again the subject of the ransom seemed to be uppermost, and we had pleasure in pointing out the difference between our Lord's giving himself to be the ransom-price for all, and his subsequent work, soon to be accomplished, of applying that ransom-price "on behalf of all the people." We noted the largeness of the work of salvation, yet every part of it fitting in with every other part. We called to mind how our Lord left the heavenly glory—how he was made flesh, for our sakes became poor—how he took upon himself the human nature, in order that he might be man's Redeemer.

We noted, however, that Jesus was not the Redeemer when he was born, except in a prophetic sense, the same sense in which he was the Savior, the Advocate, the Mediator, the King, the Priest, the Judge, the Prophet. Nor was he all of these as the lad of twelve years when he discussed the Law and the Prophets with the teachers of his day in the Temple. Nor was he all of these when he reached perfect manhood at the age of thirty years—except in a prophetic sense. His actual sacrifice took place when he was thirty years of age—when at Jordan he was baptized and symbolically represented the full surrender of his all to do the Father's will, as the same had been written aforetime in the Book, the Bible—in the Law and the Prophets. There it was that the prophecy was fulfilled of him, "Lo, I come

to do thy will, O God, as it is written in the Book." All the things that you, Father, have caused to be written in the Law and in the Prophets respecting the Savior of mankind, I am here, fully consecrated to accomplish.

At that moment our Lord sacrificed himself—laid down his earthly life in the Father's hands, saying: "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it." At that moment of sacrifice he represented "the bullock of the sin-offering" and its slaying by the High-priest. He became the antitypical High-priest in the moment of his self-surrender as the sacrifice. Immediately, as the High-priest, he passed into the Holy a "new creature." There he offered for three and a half years the incense of his earthly life-devotion, a sacrifice well pleasing to the Father. At the same time, according to the world's estimation, his self-surrender was a stench, as was represented in the burning of the bullock's hide, etc., "outside the camp." From that moment the disciples beheld, in his spirit of devotion, the antitype of the burning of the fat on the brazen altar in the Court.

From that same moment he was the Lamb of God slain—his life given up to the doing of the Father's will. We looked at the picture of this given in the book of Revelation. There we saw Jehovah upon his throne with a scroll in his hand, written in the inside and on the outside, and sealed with seven seals. No one had yet been found worthy to execute or even to be made acquainted with the divine purposes. In answer to the proclamation, "Who is worthy to take the scroll?" no one "in heaven or on earth was found worthy." Even our dear Redeemer in his previous condition was not entrusted with the scroll. But when he had made his consecration as the "Lamb of God," giving up and devoting his life without reserve to do the Father's will—then as a lamb freshly slain he was proclaimed worthy, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive glory, honor, dominion, might and power." Then the scroll was delivered to the Lamb.

"THE HEAVENS WERE OPENED"

We noted the correspondency to the giving of the scroll to the Lamb, in the fact that as soon as Jesus had indicated his full self-surrender to the Father's will, the holy Spirit came upon him begetting him as the great High-Priest to his great work. Then we read that as he went up out of the water, "the heavens were opened unto him"—the higher things were manifested to him, made clearer. As the *Logos* he had not been permitted to read the scroll; as the boy Jesus, and as the young man Jesus, he had not understood the deep meaning of the Scriptures. Even the angels, we are told, did not understand. The law was so written in types, in pictures, and the prophecies were so given in symbolical language and illustrations that the divine plan thus presented could not be understood by angels or men until the "due time" when God would grant the influence of his holy "Spirit which searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God." It was at this moment of our Lord's consecration, the moment of his death as the Lamb, the moment of his begetting and anointing as the High-Priest, the moment of the heavens or higher things being opened to him—at that moment the scroll was handed to him by the Great Eternal One. Then proclamation was made, "Worthy is the Lamb!" "The lion of the Tribe of Judah hath prevailed." Although his prevailing would not be completed until Calvary, the surrender of his will was complete, and it was accepted as the sacrifice of his all, since everything else that he had was included in this surrender of his will.

We can well imagine how the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, gave heed as the boy to the reading of the Law and Prophets every Sabbath in the synagogue. We can readily see how he knew the Scriptures thoroughly, and that his perfect mind enabled him to memorize the whole Bible from Genesis to Malachi speedily. How many times he must have wondered respecting the types of the law, the bullock of the sin-offering, the incense, the sprinkling of the blood, the killing of the Lord's goat and the sprinkling of its blood, the burning of the bodies of those beasts outside the camp, the entering of the Holy of holies on the Atonement Day, and the reconciliation of "all the people" to the Almighty.

How often he may have thought of the Passover night, the slain lamb, the sprinkled blood, the unleavened bread, the passing over of the first-borns, the exchange of the first-borns for the tribe of Levi, representing the church of the first-borns, and the selection from these of the priests who sacrificed as the antitype of the Aaronic Priesthood! How often he must have thought of and tried to associate properly together the declaration of the Messiah's glory, and the blessing of the world through Israel, and every knee bowing and every tongue confessing and in contrast, the statement about one who would be led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers be dumb—one whom it would please the Father to bruise, and to put to shame; not one bone of whom should be broken

—one who should make his grave with the rich, and be with the wicked in his death!

These hitherto complicated and apparently contradictory presentations of the Father's plan all became luminous to our Lord when the scroll was handed to the freshly slain Lamb—to the newly consecrated Jesus. The illumination by the holy Spirit opened before his mental vision the heavenly things. Type and antitype, promise and fulfillment, began to come together and our Lord hastened away from the multitude at Jordan into a solitary place in the wilderness, that there he might deliberate upon the divine purposes as they were disclosed to him by his illumination.

STUDYING RIGHTLY TO DIVIDE TRUTHS

For forty days he was rapt in study so intently that he forgot to eat, forgot to be hungry. He had meat to eat of another kind. He was absorbed in his study of the Father's will respecting him. At the conclusion of the forty days of Bible study in the wilderness he had reached the solution of all the problems proper for him to understand respecting the divine Word. Figuratively he had read and comprehended all that was written on the outside of the scroll—all that was necessary for him to know prior to the time when he would complete his sacrifice at Calvary.

That he had not yet broken the seals, and that he had not yet comprehended all the things written on the inside of the scroll, is evident from his words to the disciples on one occasion, when he said, "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no nor the angels of heaven, neither the Son of man, but the Father only." We thus see that there were certain features of the divine plan still kept secret or sealed from our Master up to the time that he had finished his course. But, after his resurrection, we remember his words, "All power in heaven and earth is given unto me."

It was after the forty days that the tempter came unto him. His first salutation was that of a friend intent upon rendering assistance. He greeted our Lord as a friend, because they had known each other before on the plane of glory. Now Satan sympathized with Jesus in that he was hungry, and in effect said to him, You perhaps are not aware of the great power that came upon you at the time of your baptism. You now have a divine power which makes it unnecessary for you to go hungry. You should use at once the power that you possess which will enable you in a word to "command these stones to become food."

When recently we stood at the fords of Jordan, where Jesus was baptized, we looked from there to the wilderness of Judea into which he went on that occasion, "Led of the Spirit," or rather according to the Greek, "Driven of the Spirit (his own spirit) into the wilderness." He was driven by his earnest desire to know fully and completely the will of the Father, that he might do it. As we beheld the wilderness of Judea full of stones, with practically nothing else in view, we could understand why the adversary suggested the turning of stones into bread, for there was nothing else to make bread of. We noticed that Satan took the most opportune time to make his attack upon the Savior—when the Master was weak and faint in body and mind through his long fast and study.

Under the illumination of the holy Spirit Jesus had for the first time been able to put together all the testimonies of the Scripture, and had seen what great sacrifices were implied before he should enter into his glory, and be able to give to the world the blessings of eternal life. It was at this moment that the adversary appeared and presented his temptations. But our Lord was proof against them. Satan left in disgust, convinced that further effort with the Master would be a waste of time. Thus we read, "Then Satan left him." We have no record that he ever returned to tempt him; angels of God then ministered to him.

We found in all this valuable lessons to those who are walking in the foot-steps of Jesus. Their illumination of the holy Spirit could not, of course, be as great as that of Jesus, but at their consecration, their baptism into death, came their spirit begetting and, as the Apostle declares, "a measure of the spirit is granted to every man (in the church) to profit withal." The measure will be according to the degree possible through his infirmity of the flesh. But to the Master who had no infirmity, the Father gave his Spirit without measure, without limitation, fully.

We noted also how the adversary makes an attack upon all of the Lord's consecrated, seeking their weak points at their weakest moments. We noted the mistake of some in parleying with the adversary, saying: How do you do it, etc., etc., and we noted that the Master's course was the reverse; that he parleyed not; he was prompt in his refusal. He left no room for the world, the flesh or the adversary to gain an advantage over him. We noted that our success as his followers will be great—

est along the same line of promptness and decision of character and that every time we stand firm for righteousness under temptation we are demonstrating our loyalty to God in accordance with our Covenant of sacrifice. We saw that the Lord proceeded along the same line of loyalty, fulfilling his consecration even unto death, the death of the cross.

WHAT DID JESUS' DEATH EFFECT?

Here we raised the question. What did Jesus accomplish by the offering of himself, begun at Jordan and finished at Calvary? Did he purchase the world? No. Did he redeem the church? No. What did he do? He secured the price, the ransom-price, sufficient whenever applied, to effect the cancellation of the sins of the whole world, but he had not yet applied it. Neither the world nor the church was as yet released from divine condemnation, or brought into full fellowship with God. Although there were five hundred brethren, who had accepted Christ and become his followers, the Father had not yet accepted these. They had offered themselves in consecration to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, they had taken up their cross to follow him, they had been justified to fellowship with God, even as Abraham, but they had not been justified to sonship and life. Hence, they could not have earthly or restitution life. Neither could they present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, because they were still sinners from the divine standpoint. No appropriation of Jesus' merit had yet been made in their case. When Jesus ascended up on high, forty days after his resurrection, he commanded representatives of these, about 120, to tarry at Jerusalem in the upper-room until they should be endued with power from on high—until the Father should recognize them—until the Father should accept the sacrifice which they had already made. But first Jesus, as their Advocate, should appear in the presence of God for them, and make such imputation of his merit to them as to cover their blemishes, and permit divine justice to accept them as "living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God."

We remembered that it was on the fiftieth day that the holy Spirit came upon the waiting ones. That was the first intimation to them that the Redeemer had been acceptable to the Father, and that he had imputed to them his merit, and that the sacrifice which they had already made was acceptable to the Father in the Beloved One, and that they were no longer merely justified to friendship, but had come into the position of sons, into covenant relationship with the Father. Thus it is written of the Jews, "He came unto his own, but his own received him not; but to as many as received him, to them gave he power (privilege) to become sons of God, even to them that believed on his name": which were begotten not of man nor of the will of the flesh, but of God—begotten of the holy Spirit. Thus they became sons of God, members of the anointed body of the great Messiah, Prophet, Priest, Mediator, King, Judge, appointed for men, on their behalf to effect reconciliation between God and men during his Millennial reign.

Meantime the same work has been progressing throughout all these eighteen centuries. Others have been called, both from the Jews and from the Gentiles, to be the followers of Jesus, his under-priests—the church of the first-borns whose names are written in heaven. As soon as this work shall have been accomplished, the great Mediator, the antitype of Moses (Acts 3:22, 23), raised up from amongst his brethren, will be completed. Then the Mediatorial kingdom will begin the blessing, uplifting and reconciling of the world. Meantime we thank God for the fact that "we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Jesus as the perfect man, the fleshly seed of Abraham, might have accomplished considerable in the way of helping mankind. As one who committed no sin, whose life would have been secure to him, even though it required twelve legions of angels to protect him, he might have been a glorious earthly prince.

But even as a great ruler amongst men, he would not have been able to accomplish the divine purpose of blessing mankind with full uplifting out of sin and death conditions to life eternal. As the man Jesus he could not have accomplished restitution for the race because he would have needed his own human life and rights for himself. The man Jesus, therefore, could not have been "the seed of Abraham" mentioned in the Abrahamic Covenant, that in the seed of Abraham all of the families of the earth shall be blessed. To become this seed he must first attain to spirit being, just as the record shows he did. By virtue of his sacrifice of his earthly nature, and by virtue of God's having raised him from the dead to the heavenly plane as a reward for his obedience, he has his earthly rights to give to justice as the ransom-price for what Adam lost. The Redeemer is the "seed of Abraham" on the spirit plane, and during this Gospel age he is finding his bride and bringing her to the same spirit plane with himself as his associate and joint-heir in all the

great work of the Millennium—the blessing of all the families of the earth. Thus it is written, "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed (spiritual) and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. 3:29.

LIFE LAID DOWN, NOT PAID OVER

Do we see clearly what Jesus sacrificed, what he laid down? He gave himself, he submitted himself to whatever might be the Father's will, but he did not forfeit his earthly life by committing sin so that it should be taken from him. Neither did he barter or exchange it for the heavenly nature. He merely submitted or laid down his earthly rights, in harmony with his own words, "I have power to lay down my life and to receive it again," authority to say this, I have obtained from my Father. No man took it from him, in the sense that no man had that power, since God had promised that, "He that keepeth the Law shall live by it." Therefore, our Lord's life would have been protected had he not voluntarily submitted and laid it down.

He laid it down that he might receive it again. He laid it down in the Father's hands, saying: "Into thy hands I commit my spirit." Then Jesus' rights to earthly life, earthly protection, earthly honor and glory, earthly dominion and power all belonged to him as a new creature when he arose from the dead. He had lost and forfeited none of his earthly rights. Those earthly rights are the basis of all the blessings of God through him to Adam and all of his race. Jesus has nothing else to give away. He needs nothing else; because, in the merit of this sacrifice there is a corresponding price for the first Adam, and a sufficiency for all.

However, Jesus does not give the church his earthly nature, and earthly rights, but keeps these to give to the world during the Millennium. Indeed, our calling is a heavenly one, and we should feel somewhat disappointed if instead of the heavenly we should receive the earthly or restitution blessing. But since Jesus does not give us these restitution blessings, and since he has no other merit to give to us or to anybody, what does he do for the church? what is our hope in Christ? what is the philosophy of it?

The answer is, that this merit which shortly is to be appropriated as the ransom-price for the sins of the whole world, was already in the hands of divine justice, unappropriated, when our Lord ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God for us, the household of faith—to present our cause to the Father. As our Advocate he declares to the Father that we are anxious to become members of the elect church, his bride, his body. In harmony with the divine arrangement he appropriates a share of his merit to us, so that our sacrifices might be acceptable to God.

Thus, instead of giving us the restitution blessings, which are for the world, our Redeemer, our Advocate, imputes to us of his righteousness, and on the strength of it the Father reckons us holy and acceptable, and immediately accepts our sacrifices. Thenceforth we are dead as human beings and our standing in God's sight is as "new creatures." But, we have this treasure in imperfect earthen vessels, in which the new creature cannot do all that it would. It is the new creature, however, that God is testing and proving—the new creature is on trial, not the flesh. The new creature has no original sin, nor is it responsible for the original sin of the old creature, which was justified and accepted of God in sacrifice and therefore gone. The responsibility of the new creature is that it shall keep its heart in the love of God, in loyalty to him. Correspondingly, of course, it will strive to keep the body, the flesh, in harmony with the divine regulations. Its zeal and energy in controlling the flesh and bringing every thought and word and act into accord, as nearly as possible with the divine will, shows the degree of its love and zeal.

PAST SINS—DAILY TRESPASSES

The new creature needs not to apologize, nor ever to remember the weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh appertaining to the period preceding the sacrifice. By faith the new creature should remember that old things have passed away, and all things have become new, for thus the Apostle declares, "There is now, therefore, no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." Our Advocate did a thorough work as respects the sins of our flesh: they are past and gone through the forbearance of God. (Rom. 3:25) The Father did a perfect work in reckoning us dead indeed to everything of the past, and in begetting us by the Spirit as new creatures—sons of God. It is for our faith to grasp the situation and to enjoy it.

However, as new creatures we are imperfect in that we have only the old body with its blemishes through which to serve the Lord. Because of antagonism of the legally dead flesh, "We cannot do the things which we would." What shall we do as respects our failure to come up to all the requirements of the

Lord, because of our fleshly imperfections? Shall we say to ourselves and to each other, God knows that these imperfect things of daily life are not willingly ours as new creatures, and therefore we need not confess them?

We answer that this would not be the proper course. The imputation of Christ's merit to our consecrated sacrifice merely covered the blemishes against us at that time, but did not cover blemishes future. Hence, daily we should remember before the throne of heavenly grace the imperfections and blemishes of each day and hour, and should ask divine forgiveness for these through our great Redeemer. Thus he taught us, "Pray ye, Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." This would not relate to original sin, which could not thus be forgiven. It relates to our subsequent shortcomings, after we have become children of God through the begetting of the holy Spirit. Thus the Apostle writes, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

"FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES"

Our Advocate not only imputed his merit for our past sins, but he is still with the Father and has an abundance of merit. Our Advocate has merit sufficient to cover the sins of the whole world, and therefore to cover all our blemishes. Hence, when we go to the Father through him, we may realize that provision has already been made for the covering of our trespasses, but that we can obtain forgiveness only through prayer. God doubtless intended a great blessing in making this arrangement. He intended that each time we come to the throne of grace, we should earnestly repent of our imperfections, and earnestly promise him that we will strive against them in the future. He would thus encourage us to earnestly seek to fortify our characters along the line of these weaknesses, that we might become stronger and stronger in the power of the Lord and in his might, and be strengthened unto every good work.

When thus we come to the Lord to obtain mercy and to find grace to help in every time of need, and promise continued and increased zeal in fighting the good fight, it puts us on our honor, as it were, and makes us more careful respecting our future

course. If perchance we fail again along the same lines, we are perchance abashed. Then comes an important testing to us. The suggestion comes that we should refrain from going to the Lord in prayer; that we should feel too much humiliated to go to him. If these suggestions be followed, the result will be alienation, coldness. The earth-born cloud will hide from us the heavenly Father's face. Even if we do not go off into greater outward sins, such a course would mean a loss of fellowship, which is very important to our growth in grace and knowledge.

"WITHOUT SPOT OR WRINKLE"

Every error, every slip, every mistake, is a spot upon our wedding garment and should be repented of and expunged. With great humility we should go to the Master that we might have such spots promptly cleansed away; as it is written, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us (new creatures) from all sin." Thus we are able to abide in his love. Those who neglect this matter may find themselves increasingly careless respecting the spotlessness of their robes, until perhaps, if they do not fall completely into the second death, they find their garments bedraggled and unfit for the wedding. The bride must be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, and the arrangement on her behalf by her Bridegroom is ample to this end. Those, therefore, who for any reason allow the spots to accumulate, and do not have them cleansed, will have a further test and be obliged to decide to return like the sow to her wallowing in the mire of sin, and thus come under the condemnation of the second death, or else, as members of the great company, they must wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb, in the great tribulation with which this age will end.

At the public session at Gilfillan Hall, our topic was, "The Overthrow of Satan's Empire," and notwithstanding the rainy weather, nearly 700 were present. We had the closest attention. Let us hope that some good was accomplished, some ears unstopped and some eyes opened to look further and to listen more attentively for the voice of the Great Shepherd, in respect to the divine plan of the ages, concerning which he is now instructing his people.

CHAUTAUQUA LAKE CONVENTION

NINE DAYS—JULY 30—AUG. 7.

We hereby confirm previous announcements, and request all who expect to attend this convention to so advise us at once—particularly such as desire us to secure for them accommodations at cottages along the shores of Lake Chautauqua. We expect to engage the apartments outright for those who order them, paying for two days at least, in advance.

We will use the large Auditorium at Celeron, which is an amusement place of the quieter sort. However, the Auditorium is far enough from the noise to serve our purposes. We anticipate that the friends will have no particular interest in the amusements. Anyway these are less patronized in the day time and our proposition is to hold convention sessions in daylight only—9 a. m. to 5 p. m., with an intermission at noon for a plain sandwich luncheon.

Our Committee in charge of arrangements is prepared to offer per day rates which include a boat ride to and from the Auditorium, a very plain noonday luncheon at the Auditorium and breakfast, supper and lodging at a cottage, all included for the following sums, which vary according to the accommodations and meals for the nine days, namely, \$9, \$11, \$14. Those desirous of hotel accommodations can be arranged for at from two to four dollars per day.

Those staying a shorter time than nine days may expect to pay a little more proportionately, \$1.25 to \$1.50 per day, all included. We have made these arrangements, believing them to be specially advantageous to all concerned. Unless we are mistaken our convention will take up nearly all the available accommodations, except at Jamestown hotels.

Our convention is held under the auspices of the "International Bible Students' Association," but excursion rates have NOT been granted in this name. There will be three general excursion rates. The first of these is the regular Chautauqua excursion on July 29. It is the cheapest excursion. It will be good to return any time within thirty days and will permit those living in New York City and vicinity, and at points east of Hornell, on the Erie Railroad, as well as all whose tickets naturally read through Buffalo, to include a visit to Niagara Falls. Those who take advantage of this special Chautauqua rate must begin their trip on Friday, July 29, excepting from points in Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee, from which States tickets will be sold only on July 28. These tickets are on sale at very cheap rates; usually they amount to about \$2.00 more than a full single fare. Then, though you purchase these tickets to the Chautauqua Assembly Grounds, you can get off at Celeron and come direct to the Audi-

torium. We have made arrangements for having these tickets validated for the return journey without inconvenience.

In the interest of those who cannot attend at the beginning of the Convention, another excursion has been granted in the name of The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society to start either August 5 or 6. The rate is not quite so cheap, however—one fare and a half. The ticket is good to return so as to reach starting point not later than August 17, and also gives option of returning via Niagara Falls, as mentioned above.

Where neither of the above rates can be secured, the following will apply: From practically all points in the United States and Canada regular summer tourist tickets are on sale daily to JAMESTOWN at fares approximately two cents per mile in each direction; or, in other words, about one fare and a half for the round trip; return limit October 31.

CONSECRATED PEOPLE OF GOD

who trust in the Redeemer's merit for their acceptance with God, are cordially invited to this convention. Let us gather with hearts full of gratitude to God and desirous of knowing and doing his will more perfectly as the days go by. Let us come expecting to receive blessings at the Lord's hand and desirous of being used of him to strengthen and comfort and assist his "brethren."

The Railroad Company has co-operated with us in issuing our Program and Information Bulletin for those desiring to attend. On the one side of it is a picture of Lake Chautauqua showing the various little cities surrounding it, the stopping-places of the little steamers. If you purpose attending the convention write us for one of these circulars. Determine as soon as possible and make your application, and, if possible, send in the money for your lodging, that everything may be prepared for your comfort in advance of your arrival. We will make no assignments of lodgings until July 15. Then we will apportion the lodgings to those ordering them and will serve their interests impartially to the best of our ability.

The spending of the evenings quietly at the cottages will give opportunity for rest and fellowship amongst the friends. If at any of the cottages there is a desire for singing in the evening or for chart-talks or whatever, the opportunity should be accepted. We trust that, as usual, the dear friends will leave an influence for good behind them. We hope that the Bible Students of this convention may long be remembered by the people on Chautauqua Lake shores as model Christians in every sense.

BRO. RUSSELL FLOODED WITH LETTERS

Brother Russell's home coming has brought to him thousands of congratulations and good wishes from friends far and near. Brother Russell appreciates greatly these evidences of

the love of the brethren! He sends, in this item, his acknowledgements and thanks and good wishes. The general interest of the harvest work forbid any attempt to respond personally.

WITHOUT A PARABLE HE SPAKE NOT

JULY 10.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."—John 6:63.

"Without a parable spake he not unto the people." What the prophet had declared of him was true, "He shall open his mouth in parables and dark sayings." It is important that we remember this. Many noble Christian people have inferred that our Lord's words were all simple, and that they presented the truth in a manner easily understood by everybody. Nothing is further from the truth. If our Lord's parables and dark sayings be taken as plain, literal statements of truth, they will lead to all kinds of errors and misapprehensions. Let us remember, therefore, the Apostle's declaration, "Without a parable spake he not unto the people."

There is absolutely nothing in the words of Jesus without a deep significance. How many have stumbled over our Lord's parables by taking them to be literal statements of facts! How absurd the conclusion drawn from the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, for instance! How absurd to conclude that simply because a man was rich, fared sumptuously every day, and was garbed in fine linen, that he must suffer through all eternity! How equally absurd to interpret the poor man Lazarus, who lay at the rich man's gate, as representing, literally, poor and diseased beggars! How unreasonable to think that only such as have had an experience of this kind, with dogs to lick their sores, and hungering for the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table, would experience the joys of heaven, according to the divine program! How foolish to think of Abraham's bosom, which could hold only two or three, as being the portion of blessing for only a handful of beggars!

Note afresh the parable of the wheat and the tares, the gathering of the former into the garner and the burning of the latter. Neither represents literal experiences. In the parable the wheat is not literal wheat, the tares are not tares. The wheat symbolizes the inheritors of the kingdom; the tares symbolize the offspring of error—children of the wicked one. The gathering into the barn of safety symbolizes the glorification of the church on the spirit plane, and precedes the shining forth of the sons of God in the glory of the Millennial kingdom, for the blessing of the groaning creation; as the Apostle declares, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." The whole creation is waiting for the shining forth of the sons of God in the kingdom, and their shining forth in truth and righteousness will scatter all the darkness of sin and error and awaken and revivify the world of mankind.

Eventually all the willingly obedient may enjoy the blessings of eternal life. On the other hand, the description of the burning of the tares, instead of referring to a literal burning, has, evidently, a symbolic significance; it means the destruction of the tare class—not their destruction as individuals, but as "tares," as imitations of the "wheat" class.

How glad we are to find the key to these symbolic statements—these parables! How glad we are that by the use of this key the parabolic figures become reasonable and beautiful! What a silver lining there is to the dark cloud of trouble which is now looming up before the world! How glad God's people must be to learn that just beyond the clouds and shadows comes the glorious Millennial day!

The parable of "the sheep and the goats," taken literally, has caused confusion to many. They think of the separation of the sheep and the goats as now in progress, failing to notice the Scriptural declaration that the parable shall find its applica-

tion "when the Son of man shall come in his glory and all his holy angels (messengers) with him. Then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another as the shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." We thus see that the application of the parable belongs to the Millennial age. All through that age the work of Christ and the church, his bride, seated with him upon his throne, will be a work of blessing to the world of mankind. And the manner in which those blessings will be received, will demonstrate the sheep-like or goat-like character of every individual of the human family. The sheep-like will come to the right hand position of favor, the goat-like, to the left hand position of disfavor. The conclusion of the thousand-year Judgment day will bring the expression of the Lord's favor towards the sheep-like, rewarding them with eternal life, and the expression of his disfavor towards the goat-like, destroying them in the "second death." This is symbolically represented by the statement, "Depart ye cursed into the lasting fire (a figure of destruction) prepared for Satan and his messengers (followers)." The reward of the righteous will thus be everlasting life. The "everlasting punishment" of the unrighteous will be everlasting death, for the "wages of sin is death and the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."—Rom. 6:23.

"I THANK THEE, FATHER"

Evidently some wise and gracious purpose stands connected with the hiding or secreting at present of the divine purpose from mankind in general. While the Scriptures declare it is a mark of special favor to the Lord's people that they are made acquainted with the divine purposes, yet nowhere do they declare that all those from whom God's plans are secreted are doomed to eternal torture, or to everlasting destruction. Thus our Lord Jesus prayed: "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because 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."

Had the hiding of the divine counsel from mankind signified eternal torture for those from whom it was hidden, there surely would have been no ground for thanking the heavenly Father for this act. We can thank him, however, that although many of the worldly wise are not privileged to know of his glorious plans, nevertheless those plans are sure. For the world to have known of the divine purposes in advance would doubtless have been injurious, because in their blindness they would have attempted to thwart these purposes and therefore would have gotten themselves into a worse condition of condemnation.

WORDS OF SPIRIT AND OF LIFE

Our text shows that however dark and parabolic were our Lord's teachings, nevertheless, rightly understood, his message is one that is spiritually helpful and life-giving to those who can and do understand it. It is this quality of the Lord's message which makes the religion of the Bible different from that of all the heathen. It is a message of life as well as a message of holiness. It is a message of forgiveness as well as a message of condemnation. It is a message of love as well as a message of justice. His wonderful words of life—they are charming, beautiful, forceful! We may read them over year after year and we see still more beauty in them, still deeper significance, and that in proportion to our own growth in grace, our growth in knowledge, and in the spirit of our Master.

CONFESSING THE SON OF GOD

MATT. 16:13-28.—JULY 17.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Our Master, wisely and with becoming modesty, hesitated to declare his own greatness. He allowed his actions to speak and to tell to his disciples that he proceeded and came forth from God, and that in the performing of miracles, and particularly in his teachings, he was the Finger of God and his mouthpiece. John the Baptist was sent to be his special forerunner. It was he that declared that Jesus was "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." It was he that declared that the Master was so much greater than himself that he was not worthy to stoop down and loose his sandals.

But after John had borne him witness, testifying, "This is he," and had declared that he saw the holy Spirit descending

upon Jesus like a dove, and that this was a sign given him whereby he might know his Messiahship, then came the time for the Master to bring the matter pointedly to the attention of his followers. John had been cast into prison and later had been beheaded. John's prophetic testimony was fulfilled, when he said of Jesus, "He must increase, but I must decrease." The mission of Jesus and his Apostles became more prominent every day, and those who had formerly talked about John were now asking respecting Jesus, whether he was a prophet sent of God, or could it be that he was the Messiah. Do the rulers indeed know whether this is the Messiah or not? Surely "no man