

was prospering him in the matter to which he had called him, he evidently was full of joy and satisfaction and peace. So it should be with all the Lord's people who have been called to be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, for "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept through faith and by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." They, too, should realize that the proper way to show their appreciation of the Lord's promised blessings is by a manifestation of faith in him, confidently trusting and rejoicing in these. Wherever we find fear, trepidation, unrest, we may know that these are symptoms of some spiritual mal-

ady; because whatever may be the outward disturbances, troubles, vexations, it is the privilege of those who are the Lord's to have the peace of God which passeth all understanding continually ruling in their hearts. It is their privilege to realize fully, thoroughly that all things are working together for good to them because they love the Lord, and with this thought of their call to the kingdom and of the Lord's willingness that they should serve therein, and with the assurance that he will give grace and glory and no good thing withhold from those who walk uprightly, we certainly have reason for thankfulness and heart-rejoicing before him.

VOL. XXIV

ALLEGHENY, PA., DECEMBER 1, 1903

No. 23

## "HALLELUJAH! WHAT A SAVIOR!"

CHRIST, THE INSTRUCTOR, JUSTIFIER, SANCTIFIER AND DELIVERER OF HIS PEOPLE.

*"Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, [justification], and sanctification, and redemption [deliverance]."*

—1 Cor. 1:30.

### CHRIST OUR WISDOM

Since God's dealings with his creatures recognize their wills, the first step in his dealings with them, therefore, is to give them knowledge, or "wisdom," as it is translated in the above Scripture. It is for this reason that preaching was the first command of the Gospel age. To the worldly-minded the preaching of forgiveness on account of faith in the crucified Jesus did not seem the wise course. To them it would have seemed better for God to have commanded something to be *done by them*. But, as Paul says—"It pleased God to save those who believe by [knowledge imparted through what the worldly consider] the foolishness of this preaching."—1 Cor. 1:21.

The first gift of God to our redeemed race, therefore was knowledge.

(1) Knowledge of the greatness and absolute justice of the God with whom we have to do. This knowledge was prepared for by the Mosaic Law, which was a "schoolmaster," or pedagogue, to lead men to Christ. And Christ, by his obedience to that law, *magnified* the law and showed its honorableness, its worthiness; and thus honored God, the author of that law, and showed his character.

(2) Knowledge of his own weakness, of his fallen, sinful and helpless condition, was also needful to man, that he might appreciate his need of a Savior such as God's plan had provided for him.

(3) Knowledge of how the entire race of Adam fell from divine favor and from mental, moral and physical perfection, through him, was also necessary. Without this knowledge we could not have seen how God could be *just* in accepting the one life, of Christ, as the ransom price for the life of the whole world.

(4) Without knowledge as to what is the penalty for sin—that "the wages of sin is *death*"—we never should have been able to understand how the *death* of our Redeemer paid the penalty against Adam and all in him.

(5) Knowledge, in these various respects, was, therefore, absolutely necessary to us, as without it we could have had no proper faith, and could not have availed ourselves of God's provision of justification, sanctification and deliverance through Christ.

Most heartily, therefore, we thank God for knowledge or wisdom concerning his plan. And we see that this wisdom came to us through Christ; because, had it not been for the plan of salvation of which he and his cross are the center, it would have been useless to give the knowledge, useless to preach, because there would have been no salvation to offer.

### CHRIST OUR JUSTIFICATION

That Christ is made unto righteousness or justification implies,—

(1) That we are unjust, or unrighteous in the sight of God, and unworthy of his favor.

(2) That, in view of our unworthiness, God had in some manner arranged that Christ's righteousness should stand good for "us," and thus give "us" a standing before God which we could not otherwise have because of our imperfections—our unrighteousness.

(3) This scripture does not imply that Christ's righteousness covers every sinner, so that God now views every sinner as though he were righteous, and treats all as his children. No, it refers merely to a special class of sinners—sinners who, having come to a knowledge of sin and righteousness, and having learned the undesirableness of sin, have repented of sin, and sought to flee from it and to come into harmony with God. This

is the particular class referred to in this scripture—"who of God is made unto *us* justification," or righteousness.

(4) How God has arranged or caused Christ to be *our* "righteousness," or justification, is not here explained; but what we know of divine law and character assures us that the principle of *Justice*, the very foundation of divine government, must somehow have been fully satisfied in all of its claims. And other scriptures fully substantiate this conclusion. They assert that God so arranged as to have the price of man's sin paid for him; and that the price paid was an exact equivalent, a *ransom* or *corresponding price*, offsetting in every particular the original sin and just penalty, death, as it came upon the original sinner and through him by heredity upon all men. (Rom. 5:12, 18-20) He tells us that this plan of salvation was adopted *because* by it "God might be [or continue] just, and [yet be] the justifier of him [any sinner] that believeth in Jesus"—that comes unto God under the terms of the New Covenant, of which Christ Jesus is the mediator, having sealed it, or made it a covenant, by his own precious blood.—Heb. 13:21; 10:29.

(5) While the benefits of this gracious arrangement are only for "us," for "believers," for those who come unto God by Christ—under the provisions of the "New Covenant"—these benefits are, nevertheless, made applicable to *all*; for God's special provision for the whole world of sinners is that *all* shall "come to a *knowledge of the truth*," that they *may*, if then they will accept the conditions of God's covenant, be everlastingly saved. A knowledge and a rejection of error—of false doctrines which misrepresent the divine character even though they be mixed with a little misconstrued truth—will not constitute grounds for condemnation; but a knowledge of *the truth* and a rejection of it will bring condemnation to the second death. The Greek text states this much more emphatically than our common English translation. It says, "come to an *accurate knowledge of the truth*."—1 Tim. 2:4.

(6) The provision made was sufficient for *all men*. Our Lord gave himself [in death] a *ransom*—a corresponding price—for *all*; he was a "propitiation [or sufficient satisfaction] for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:2) As a consequence, he is both able and willing "to save unto the uttermost [i. e., to save from sin, and from divine disfavor, and from death, and all these *everlastingly*] *all that come* unto God by him." (Heb. 7:25) And inasmuch as God's provision is so broad, that *all* shall come to an *exact knowledge of the truth* respecting these provisions of divine mercy under the terms of the New Covenant;—inasmuch as the provision is that *all* the sin and prejudice-blinded eyes shall be opened, and that the devil, who for long centuries has deceived men with his misrepresentations of the truth, is to be bound for a thousand years, so that he can deceive the nations no more; and that then a highway of holiness shall be cast up in which the most stupid cannot err or be *deceived*; and in view of all this provision God declares that *all men* will be saved from the guilt and penalty incurred through Adam's sentence. *Because*, when all of these blessed arrangements have been carried into effect, there will be *no reason* for a solitary member of the human family remaining a stranger and alien from God's family except by *his own choice* or preference for unrighteousness, and that with an accurate knowledge that *all unrighteousness is sin*. Such as, of their own preference, knowingly choose sin, when the way and means of becoming servants of God are clearly understood by them, are wilful sinners on their own account, and will receive the second death sentence as the wages of their own opposition to God's righteous arrangements.

\* See June 15, 1919, issue, for critical examination of Covenants.

The world's salvation will be complete the moment all have come to an *accurate knowledge* of the truth concerning God's great plan of salvation; because then they will know that by accepting Christ and the New Covenant which God offers to all through Christ, they may have *life everlasting*—salvation to the uttermost. Whether they will hear (heed) or whether they will forbear (refuse to heed) will not alter the fact that *all* will thus have been saved from Adamic sin and death—will have had a full salvation tendered to them. Thus, the living God will be the Savior of *all men*—especially or everlastingly, however, the Savior of only those who accept his grace and become "his people" under the New Covenant.—1 Tim. 4:10.

(7) It is only to "us" that Christ is made *justification* or righteousness. Though all men are to be *saved* in the sense of being brought to the knowledge and opportunity of salvation, none have Christ as their *justification*, the covering of their imperfections, imputing his righteousness to them, except "us"—the household of faith. "Unto you, therefore, *which believe* he is precious." (1 Pet. 2:7) He of God is made unto us justification, righteousness, covering and cleansing from the unintentional weaknesses and shortcomings of the present, as well as from the original sin and its sentence. Who is he who condemns us? Will that Anointed One who died; and still more has been raised, who also is at the right hand of God, and who intercedes on our behalf? Nay, he has been made our justification; it is the merit of his great sacrifice that speaks our justification.—Rom. 8:34.

Justification signifies to make right, or whole, or just. And from the word "whole" comes the word "(w) holiness," signifying soundness, or perfection, or righteousness. None of the fallen race are either actually or reckonedly whole, sound, perfect or just by nature. "There is none righteous [just, sound, holy], no, not one; all have sinned." But all who come unto God by Christ, whom he has accepted as the justification or righteousness of all who accept the New Covenant, are from that moment accepted and treated as sound, perfect, holy. Although we are actually unholy or imperfect, we are made "partakers of God's holiness;" first, reckonedly, in Christ, and, second, more and more actually by the eradication of our sinful tendencies and the development of the fruits and graces of the Spirit, through chastisements, experience, etc. (Heb. 12:10) God not only begins on the basis of holiness, imputing to us Christ's merit to cover our demerits, but he continues on the same line, and ever urges us to "be holy [to strive after actual soundness and perfection], even as he is holy." (1 Pet. 1:15, 16) And he promises the faithful strivers that they shall ultimately attain absolute holiness, soundness, perfection—in the resurrection, when they shall be made actually like Christ, as now their wills are copies of his. For "without holiness [thus attained] no man shall see the Lord." (Heb. 12:14) Hence, "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he [Christ] is pure"—seeking to be as much like him as possible now, and by and by to be fully in his image.—1 John 3:3, 2.

Justified persons and no others are *Christians*, in the proper use of that term.

#### CHRIST OUR SANCTIFICATION

The term "Sanctification," used in this text, means *set apart, consecrated, devoted to, or marked out for a holy use or purpose*.

Christ by God is made unto us sanctification. That is to say, God through Christ sets apart or marks out for a special share in his great plan "us"—the church.

Many make the serious error of supposing that God is sanctifying the world.—sanctifying sinners. As a consequence of this error, many are seeking to copy Christ's example, and thus be sanctified before God, while they repudiate the doctrine of the *ransom*, or justification by faith. They confound sanctification and justification in their minds and suppose that if they consecrate or sanctify or set apart their lives to God's service and to deeds of kindness they are *thereby* justified.

This is a serious error. Justification is entirely separate and distinct from sanctification; and no one can be sanctified in God's sight, and in the Scriptural sense, unless he has *first* been justified or cleansed from all sin.

Consecrating a person or thing to God's service does not *cleanse* that person or thing. On the contrary, God always refuses to *accept* anything imperfect or unclean. This is distinctly and repeatedly shown in the typical arrangements of the law given to typical Israel. The priests were obliged to wash themselves and put on new, clean linen garments *before consecration* to their office and work as God's typically set apart, or sanctified, priesthood. Their cleansing and new clothing represented *justification*, the appropriation of Christ's righteousness instead of the filthy rags of their own unrighteousness, as members of the fallen race.

The seal or mark of their *consecration* was a totally different one, and followed the cleansing ceremony, as consecration should in every case follow justification. The sign or mark of consecration or sanctification was the anointing with the holy oil, which symbolized the holy Spirit.

The anointing oil or symbol of consecration was poured upon the head of the high priest only, but the under-priests were represented in the members of his body, even as Christ is the head over the church which is his body, and all together constitute the royal priesthood. So the holy Spirit given without measure to our Lord and head applies to us (his body) through him. The Father gave the spirit to the Son only: *all* of the anointing oil was poured upon the head. At Pentecost it ran down from the head to the body, and has continued with the body ever since, and whoever comes into the "body" comes thereby under the consecrating influence—the spirit of holiness, the spirit of God, the spirit of Christ, the spirit of the truth.—Acts 2:4.

But in consecrating the typical priests the blood was not ignored. It was put upon all, upon the tip of the right ear, upon the thumb of the right hand and upon the great toe of the right foot, thus showing that the hearing of faith, the work of faith and the walk of faith must all be touched and made holy by an appreciation of the precious blood of atonement—the blood of Christ—the blood of the New Covenant. And then the garments of all the priests—their clean linen garments—were sprinkled with a mixture of the blood and the oil, implying that both justification through the blood and sanctification through the possession of the spirit of holiness are necessary in our consecration.

To what end or service are God's people, the Royal Priesthood, consecrated or set apart?

Some would be inclined to answer: To live without sin, to practice the graces of the spirit, to wear plain clothing and in general to live a rather gloomy life now, hoping for greater liberty and pleasure hereafter.

We reply, This is the common but mistaken view. True, God's people do seek to avoid sin; but that is not the *object* of their consecration. Before consecration, they learned the exceeding sinfulness and undesirableness of sin, and saw Christ Jesus as their sin-bearer and cleanser. Consequently, they had fled from sin *before* consecration. When consecrated they will still loathe and abhor sin, and that more and more as they grow in grace and in knowledge; but we repeat that to seek to live free from sin is not a proper definition of consecration or sanctification.

It is true also that all of the consecrated will seek to put on the graces of Christ's spirit and example; but neither is this the *object* of our call to consecration under the Gospel high-calling.

It is true, also, that our consecration may lead to plainness of dress, and bring upon us suffering for righteousness' sake, in this present evil world (age); but, we repeat, these are not the *objects* of our consecration. They are merely incidental results.

The object of God in calling out the Gospel church, and providing for the consecration or sanctification of its members, is a grand and worthy one; and when once clearly seen by the eye of faith it makes all the incidentals which it will cost, such as self-denials in dress, loss of friends and companionships, and even persecution for the truth's sake, etc., to be esteemed but light afflictions, not worthy to be compared to the glorious object of our consecration, which is that we may become "partakers of the divine nature" and "joint-heirs with Christ," and together with him bless the world during its day of judgment—the Millennium—as we will show.

God in his wisdom and foreknowledge knew that sin would enter this world and bring its blight,—sorrow, pain and death. He foresaw that after their experience with sin, some of his creatures would be, not only willing, but anxious, to forsake sin and return to his fellowship and love and the blessing of life everlasting. It was in view of this foreknowledge that God formed his *plan* for human salvation.

In that plan Christ Jesus our Lord had first place, first honor. As he was the beginning of the creation of God, so he was the chief of all God's creatures thus far brought into being. But God purposed a *new* creation—the creation of a new order of beings different and higher than men, angels and archangels—higher than all others, and of his own divine essence or nature. The worthiness of any one accepted to that great honor should be recognized not only by God himself, but by all of his intelligent creatures. Hence, God, who knew well the character of his first-begotten Son (our Lord Jesus), decided to prove or test his well-beloved Son in a manner that would prove to all of his intelligent creatures, what they all now recognize in the *new* song, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain

to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing."—Rev. 5:12.

But the exaltation of our Lord, who already was the chief of all creation, was even less remarkable than another feature of the divine plan, foreordained before the foundation of the world (1 Pet. 1:2; Eph. 1:4); namely, that he would make to some of his human creatures (of the race sentenced as unworthy of any future life, but *redeemed* from that sentence by Christ's sacrifice) an *offer* of joint-heirship and companionship with his beloved Son, in the order of the *new* creation (of the divine nature), of which he has made the worthy Lamb the head and chief, *next* to himself.—1 Cor. 15:27.

This offer is not made to all of the redeemed race, but to *many*—"Many are called." The called are *only* those who in this age *are* justified by faith in Christ's atoning sacrifice. Unbelievers and scoffers are called to repentance and faith; but none are called to this high calling of participation in the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4) until they have forsaken sin and laid hold upon Christ as their Redeemer.

If the *worthiness* of the Lamb was necessary to be shown, the worthiness of those whom he redeemed to be his joint-heirs (called also the bride, the Lamb's wife) would also need to be shown, proved, manifested before angels as well as before men, that God's ways may be seen to be just and equitable.

It is for this reason that God calls upon those whom he *does* call, to *consecrate themselves to him*—not in dress or word merely, but in everything. It is not a consecration to preach merely, although all the consecrated will delight to use every opportunity in telling to others the good tidings of God's love. It is not a consecration to temperance reform, social reform, political reform, or any other work of reform, although we may and should feel a deep interest in anything that would benefit the fallen race. But our devotion should be as that of a maid to her mistress, or of soldiers to their officers, or, better yet, as that of a dutiful child toward a beloved parent—swift to hear, quick to obey, not planning or seeking our own wills, but the will of our Father in heaven. Just such an attitude is implied in the words sanctified, or consecrated to God. It takes hold of the *will*, and therefore rules the entire being, except where uncontrollable weaknesses or insurmountable obstacles hinder. And since our call and acceptance are based upon the New Covenant, which accepts a perfect will on the part of those trusting in the precious blood, and does not demand perfection of deeds, it follows that all of us, no matter how degraded by the fall, may be acceptable to God in the beloved, and make their calling and election sure.

Nor is this arrangement of the New Covenant (by which those in Christ whose wills and efforts are right toward God are not held responsible for the full letter of God's law, but for the observance of its spirit or meaning, to the extent that they have knowledge, opportunity and ability) a violation of justice, as some have assumed. God's law was designed for perfect creatures, and not for fallen ones; but under the New Covenant in Christ, God has adapted his law to the condition of the fallen ones without interfering with that law itself or even with its spirit. The perfect law, dealing with the perfect man, demanded a full consecration of his will to the wisdom and will of his Creator, and an obedience to that Creator's Word to the extent of his ability. But since man was created "upright" (and not fallen), in the moral image and likeness of God (and not born in sin and shapen in iniquity), it follows that his perfect will, operating through a perfect body and under favorable conditions, *could* have rendered *perfect* obedience; and hence nothing less could be acceptable to God.

How just, how reasonable and how favorable is God's arrangement for us! Yet he assures us that, while he has made all the arrangements favorable for us, he must insist on our wills being just right,—we must be pure in heart, and in this respect exact copies of his Beloved Son, our Lord. (Rom. 8:29 —*Diaglott*) Of those who learn of and accept God's grace in Christ, in the forgiveness of sins under the New Covenant, all of whom are called to this high calling of joint-heirship with Christ in the divine nature and its honors, only a few will make their calling and election sure (or complete), because the testings of their wills and faith are so exacting—so crucial.

Nor should either of these God-declared facts surprise us: it is not strange, but reasonable, that God should *test* severely, yea, with "fiery trials" (1 Pet. 4:12), the faith and love of those invited to so high a station. If they be not loyal and trustful to the last degree, they surely are "not fit for the kingdom," its responsibilities and its divine honors. Nor should it surprise us to be informed by God's Word that only a "few," a "little flock," will gain the prize to which many are called and for which many consecrate. Few are willing to "endure" a great fight of afflictions; partly while being made a gazing stock, both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly as compan-

ions of those who are so abused for Christ's sake and his truth's sake.—Heb. 10:32, 33.

In a word, the trial of the justified and consecrated consists in the presenting to them of *opportunities* to serve God and his cause in this present time, when, because of sin abounding, whosoever will live godly and hold up the light will suffer persecution. Those whose consecration is complete and of the proper kind will rejoice in their privilege of serving God and his cause, and will count it all joy to be accounted worthy to suffer in such a cause, and *thus* to attest to God the sincerity of their love and of their consecration to him. Such consecrated ones, pure in heart (in will or intention), realizing the object of present trials, glory in tribulations brought upon them by faithfulness to Christ and his Word, realizing that their experiences are similar to those of the Master, and that thus they have evidence that they are walking in the footsteps of him who said, "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. Ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."—1 John 3:13; John 15:18, 19; Rev. 2:10.

Furthermore, they glory in tribulations because they realize that the Lord will be near them while they endure faithfully, and that he will not permit them to be tempted above what they are able to bear, but will with every temptation provide some way of escape; because they realize the necessity of forming character, and that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope—a hope that maketh not ashamed; and because they realize that all these favorable results of tribulation follow, on account of a genuine consecration in which the love of God has been shed abroad in the heart, displacing the spirit of the world, the spirit of selfishness—1 Cor. 10:13; Rom. 5:3, 5.

"He that committeth sin [wilfully] is of the devil." "Whosoever is begotten of God . . . cannot sin [wilfully]." (1 John 3:3-10; 5:18) And we have seen that all of those acceptable to God in Christ were obliged to come unto him under the New Covenant, whose first condition is faith in Christ; and whose second condition is an entire consecration of their *wills* to God's will and service. Hence, any *wilful* sin would mean that they had repudiated the New Covenant and were no longer recognized as begotten of the truth, but under the influence of sin, and hence begotten of the devil—his children.

If any justified and consecrated child of God commit sin it will be, at most, only *partially wilful*—largely of weakness or deception. He may feel his shame and weep bitterly, as did Peter; but all such penitence would but prove that his sin was not of the wilful kind that would mark him as "of the devil." No: so long as the seed of the truth, and of his consecration, remains in him, he cannot sin (wilfully). But if any trespass under deception or weakness, and not wilfully, he has an advocate with the Father.—"Jesus Christ the [absolutely] righteous" one, whose merit is applicable for all unwilful errors of such as abide under the shadow of the New Covenant. If he confess his sin, God is just to forgive him—because Christ died. (1 John 1:7, 9; 2:1) But if we should say that we have no sin, no imperfection, we deceive ourselves, make God a liar, and disown the Advocate whom God provided; for we are weak through the fall, and liable to deception and error at the hands of the world, the flesh, and the devil.—1 John 1:8, 10.

Having seen what sanctification is, its object or result and its present cost, we note that Christ by God is made unto us sanctification—in that we could have no such call and could experience no such work of grace, under the divine plan, except for Christ and the work he did for us;—justifying us before the law of God, sealing for us the New Covenant and making us fit for this call to "glory, honor and immortality."

#### CHRIST OUR REDEMPTION, OR DELIVERANCE

Many readers confound the words *redemption* and *redem.* found in the New Testament, whereas they refer to different features of the work of Christ. The word *redem.* in its every use in the New Testament signifies to *acquire* by the payment of a price, while the word *redemption* in its every New Testament use signifies the deliverance or *setting free* of that which was acquired by the payment of a price. "We were redeemed [purchased] with the precious blood [the sacrificed life, the death] of Christ." We wait for "the redemption [the deliverance] of our body" (the church) from present imperfections and death. We wait for "the redemption [deliverance] of the purchased possession."—1 Pet. 1:18, 19; Rom. 8:23; Eph. 1:14.

In Christ is our redemption, or deliverance; for so God has ordained. He who redeemed, or bought us with the sacrifice of his own life, gives us, as our Prophet or Teacher, *wisdom* by his Gospel, to see our fallen state and himself as our helper; as our Priest, he first *justifies* us and then *sanctifies* or conse-

crates us, as his under priesthood; and, finally, as King, he will *fully deliver* the faithful from the dominion of sin and death, to the glory, honor and immortality of the divine nature;—for “God will raise up [from the dead] us also, *by Jesus*.” If faithful to our call and covenant, even unto death, we shall at the second coming of our Redeemer, receive “an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us who are kept by the power of God [his Word and providence] through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.”—Jas. 1:12; 1 Pet. 1:4, 5; Rom. 1:16; 2 Cor. 4:14.

“Hallelujah! What a Savior!”

Truly he is able and willing to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him.—Heb. 7:25.

#### WHOM GOD DID PREDESTINATE

In the light of the foregoing, now read a hitherto obscure passage of Scripture: “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *must be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover [the class] whom he did predestinate [must be copies of his Son], them he also called [or invited to that honor through the Gospel]; and whom he called, them he also [previously] justified [because he could not consistently call to honor and glory those who were under his own sentence of death as sinners]; and whom he justified them he also [previously] honored [by sending to them the Gospel message].”—Rom. 8:28-30.

Thus the Apostle continues his argument concerning the favor of God toward the church, asserting that God had a purpose to fulfil, and that the *call* of the Church is in accordance with that purpose. (Peter declares the same thing.—1 Pet. 1:2) And he asserts that all God's dealings and arrangements correspond with that purpose, and co-operate for its accomplishment. God's predestination was, (1) that he would

have a class of beings of the divine nature; (2) that each one of that class must have a fixed character, like that of his ever-faithful, beloved Son. To get such a class, the Apostle reasons and declares, God must *call* or *invite* some (just as we see he is doing), because “no man taketh this honor to himself.” (Heb. 5:4) But whom would God call or invite? None were worthy; all had gone out of the way; none were righteous, no not one. Hence it was necessary that God provide for the *justification* of those he would *call*. But he could justify only such as *believed* in Jesus; and how could they believe on him of whom they had not heard, and without a preacher sent of God? (Rom. 10:14) Hence it was necessary that these be honored with the Gospel message in this age, in advance of its general revealing to every creature during the Millennial age.—Rom. 1:16; 2 Cor. 4:6; 1 Cor. 15:1.

True, many more were *called* than will be acceptable—many more than will acquire the likeness of the Beloved Son; and many were *justified* who did not, after believing, consecrate themselves, and whose justification consequently lapsed; and many were honored with a hearing of the Gospel who, after hearing a little of it, rejected the message of mercy and favor. But *all* the preaching, justifying and calling of this Gospel age has been to the intent that the foreknown class of the predestinated character might be selected and made joint-heirs with Christ.—See also 2 Tim. 1:8-10.

“What shall *we* [who have been so highly favored by God, and for whose successful running of the race every necessary arrangement and provision has been made] say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?” And in view of this let each say,—“What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows (fulfill my covenant of consecration) unto the Lord now, in the presence of all his people.” (This will mean, as in our Lord's case, faithfulness dying daily, 1 Cor. 15:31—even unto death, but)—“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his holy ones.”—Psa. 116:12-15.

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## THE DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE

1 KINGS 8:1-11, 62, 63.—DECEMBER 13.

GOLDEN TEXT:—“*I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.*”—Psa. 122:1.

Very interesting is the story of the great Temple of God purposed and largely prepared for by King David and built by King Solomon the wise. It was commenced in the fifth year of Solomon's reign and finished in the twelfth. The story of its cost seems fabulous, the gold and silver employed in its construction being estimated at from \$1,000,000,000 to \$2,500,000,000. We are inclined to think the smaller estimate nearer to the truth, or that the ancient standard of values, a talent, possibly, experienced a change of values, as for instance, was the case in the English pound sterling, which originally meant a pound of silver in value but subsequently a quarter of a pound of silver, and today by reason of the change of standard from silver to gold, it has a still different meaning not at all connected with silver. Similarly the Jewish talent may have experienced changes of value in the long centuries of its use. However, regardless of the aggregated value of the gold, silver, brass, precious stones, constituting the Temple, we have every reason to conclude that it was a wonderful structure for its day—one of which King Solomon in all his glory and wisdom, and the people of Israel with him, had good reason to rejoice and not feel ashamed.

The context shows that King Hiram of Phoenicia not only contributed largely to the Temple as a friendly gift, but also supplied skilled workmen under Solomon's pay, who in various ways assisted in the preparation of the brazen columns for the porch, utensils for the court, etc., etc. Thirty thousand Israelites were drafted to serve in the Temple construction one month out of each quarter. Besides these there would appear to have been 150,000 laborers, apparently foreigners, hired from outside (1 Kings 5:13-16; 9:21, 22), or they may have been aliens

residing in the land of Palestine—Canaanites. The overseers would appear to have been 550 chiefs and 3,300 subordinates, of whom 250 were Israelites, and 3,600 Canaanites. (2 Chron. 2:17; 8:10) This preponderance of the Canaanites amongst the overseers seems to imply that the laborers were Canaanites, and also reminds us that “the Canaanite was still in the land.” The fact that the Canaanites, strangers from the Commonwealth of Israel, were the chief laborers in the construction of the great Temple, seems to have been typical of the fact that aliens, strangers, foreigners, and enemies of the Truth have the larger share in the work of preparing the antitypical Temple. Their hammering, their chiseling, their melting and casting, under divine providence, serve to make ready the living stones and the glorious pillars for the spiritual house. Verily they know not what they do. Their work is greater, better, than they comprehend, as the glories of eternity will demonstrate.

The lesson opens with the Temple's construction finished, and the chiefs of Israel gathered with King Solomon at Jerusalem for its dedication, at the time we call October, corresponding to the Jewish New Year feast, held in connection with the great Day of Atonement. The Atonement Day was probably past, the sacrifices of atonement having been made in the Tabernacle and the blessing of the Lord, as usual, dispensed upon the people for the new year. While they were thus legally cleansed, reconciled to God typically, was the most appropriate time for the dedication of the Temple, which represented the spiritual hopes and aims of the nation.

The Ark, representing typically the divine covenant with Abraham, the fulfilment of which centered in the Christ, must be transferred from the Tabernacle to the Temple, that thus



the latter might supersede the former as the meeting place between God and his covenant people. The thousands of sacrifices offered during the procession of the King and priests and the celebrities of the nation, besides evidencing their devotion to God and their willingness to sacrifice, had a typical significance as representing the consecration even unto death of the whole company thus engaged in transferring the emblem of their faith and hope. In some respects, therefore, the King and the chiefs of the nation represented typically our Lord Jesus and the overcomers, and the chief priests and under priests represented the same from another standpoint. The procession was the meeting place between the sacrificing emblems of the present age and the typical representation of the kingdom glories and honors of the next age. The Lord's people today seem to be following this type. The Great King, anti-typical Solomon, has about finished the Temple construction and has sent forth the invitation of the heads, the chiefs of spiritual Israel, to attend and share in the great dedication. These chiefs are not the great of this world, but the Lord's very elect. From the four quarters of the spiritual heavens they are gathering, the procession has already commenced; but as the Temple was not complete until the Ark, its most important part, was placed in position, so the glorious Temple will not really be finished until every member of the body of Christ has been changed from the Tabernacle condition to the Temple or permanent condition in the first resurrection.

The declaration that there was nothing in the Ark save the tables of stone on which was inscribed the law, seems at first to be in conflict with the Apostle's statement in Heb. 9:4, where he mentions also the golden pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded. We are to remember, however, that this description related to the Tabernacle and not to the Temple. The golden bowl of manna which did not corrupt was a type or illustration of the immortality or incorruptibility which the Lord has provided for the royal priesthood, and the budded rod was a reminder that the blessing and fruitfulness and privilege of service belong to the antitypical Levite, but as types both of these will end in the present dispensation. They met with the Tabernacle conditions; they will not be needed in the future conditions of glory, honor, and immortality represented by the Temple, because there the glorious things typified by these will have been fully entered into by the overcomers of the church. But the law will still be an integral part of the divine covenant. As the Apostle explains the fulfilling of the law is love, and love never faileth. It will always be the divine requirement and essential to participation in any of the blessings connected with the divine favor represented in the Ark of the covenant.

While the priests proceeded with their work of placing the Ark, the Levites, "arrayed in white linen, having psalteries and harps, stood at the east of the [brazen] altar, with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets. It came to pass that the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord; and when they lifted up their voices with the trumpets, and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord saying, 'For he is good; for his mercy endureth forever,' that then the house [Temple] was filled with the cloud"—the peculiar pillar of cloud which symbolized the Lord's presence through the wilderness journey, and subsequently in connection with the Tabernacle, and now in the Temple, for the first time rested upon it. This, which outwardly had the appearance of a cloud in the sanctuary on the mercy seat, represented an extreme brightness—so great that the priests could no longer remain in the Holy.

But meantime the King explained to the people the significance of the Temple, that it was the house of God and built under divine direction, given to himself and to his father David. Then standing near the altar of the court, spreading forth his hands toward heaven, he prayed a most beautiful prayer, and one which we recognize as prophetically directed, and as teaching us the purpose and object of the great antitypical Temple constructed by the antitypical Solomon. The literal Temple was to be the place toward which all the Israelites should look as God's dwelling place, the center of his power, authority, forgiveness and blessing and help in every time of need. So in due time, when the spiritual Temple shall have been constructed and dedicated and filled with divine power, it will be the center toward which all who would approach God shall look for help and assistance and blessing and forgiveness, toward which they shall make their prayers, and in which they shall realize the manifestation of divine power and blessing on their behalf.

After Solomon's dedicatory prayer was finished, the Lord openly manifested his favor toward the King and all the people by accepting their sacrifices with fire from heaven, as we read: "When Solomon had made an end of praying the fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of Jehovah filled the house [the Tem-

ple]. . . . And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down and the glory of the Lord was upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement and worshipped and praised the Lord, saying 'For he is good, for his mercy endureth forever'"—probably joining with the Levites in singing Psalm 136.

It is noteworthy that the Levites and the people did not sing of divine wrath never ending, but of divine mercy *forever*. This, however, according to the strict significance of the Hebrew word, does not mean "without an end," but "to an end"—that is to say, that divine mercy shall be exercised to its completeness, to its fulfillment, until every creature shall have been brought to a knowledge of the Lord and his goodness and to an opportunity of knowing him and of benefiting by the great promise made to Abraham and symbolized in the Ark of the covenant, through which all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Similarly in the last book of the Bible we read of the song of Moses and the Lamb, sung by the antitypical priests, saying, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways thou King of saints. Who shall not reverence thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy: for all peoples shall come and worship before thee, because thy judgments [righteous dealings] are made manifest." (Rev. 15:3, 4) This is the song which none but the overcomers can truly appreciate and sing at the present time, but by and by—when the glory of the Lord shall have filled the Temple—the peoples, the multitudes, shall learn that song, shall learn of the divine mercy, and as a prophecy it shall be fulfilled and all peoples shall bow to the Lord to confess his goodness and his love and to enjoy at the hands of the antitypical Solomon (the Christ), as prophet, priest and king of the new dispensation, the opportunity of full reconciliation to God and full return to the perfect conditions of mind and of body, and to life everlasting, lost by Adam's disobedience, and brought back by the great Redeemer for as many as will receive it upon God's terms.

Naturally and properly our chief interest centered in the antitypical Temple, the antitypical Solomon, the antitypical priests and antitypical people. There is a sense in which every member of the new creation may be said to be individually a temple of the holy Spirit now, a sense in which every individual should build up his own faith and character from the divine promises and by compliance with the divine requirements, but this is not the larger antitypical view of the Temple. In its antitypical sense Solomon's Temple certainly represented the glorified Christ, head and body, built up of living stones, as the Apostle Peter explains. Under the supervision of the anointed, the work of gathering the various stones for the Temple has been in progress throughout the Gospel age. As not any and every stone was taken for Solomon's Temple, but only those of specific dimensions and peculiar pattern, in accordance with the plan, so it is with the antitypical, the living, stones. Only a certain class are approached at all, and only those which being cut out are first roughly quarried out and found suitable in character and dimensions are tooled at all, and only those which under the tool yield proper results and become conformed to the intended pattern will ultimately find their place in the glorious Temple which our Lord as the great master-builder is constructing. As before intimated, this accounts for the fact that various agents, even Satan himself, may be used of the Lord as servants for the chiseling and polishing and fitting and preparing of these living stones for their future glorious position. Viewed in this light what a satisfaction may come from the trials and difficulties which all the Lord's people are sure to experience, and without some of which they would be justified in fearing that they are not sons but bastards. (Heb. 12:8) Only those who have some such insight into the divine program can ever reach that position to which the Apostle Paul attained, who claimed that he could also rejoice in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience and patience experience and experience hope, which will not be put to shame, but which will be rewarded eventually in the glorious joint-heirship in the kingdom promised by our Lord to his faithful.

To our understanding of the teaching of Scripture, the fact that the materials for Solomon's Temple were prepared before its construction began, and were so perfectly fitted that no iron tool needed to be used in the construction, indicates that the antitype, this Gospel age, has seen the preparation of the various living stones, which when ready were marked of the Lord to their positions in the Temple, and fell asleep in Jesus until the time for the first resurrection, the time for the construction of the Temple. To our understanding we are now living in that time and have been in it since 1878. The living stones of the past have been brought together and the Temple is merely waiting for the few living stones which are still under process of trial and disciplining, chiseling and polishing. The resurrec-

tion "change" coming to each of these in turn places him with the fellow-members of the grand Temple of the Lord. The picture of the bringing of the Ark would seem to be another illustration of the same lesson—the bringing of the members of the body of Christ from the Tabernacle or earthly condition to the heavenly or Temple condition. Soon the Ark will be in place, and priests and Levites and people are generally learning to sing of the Lord's mighty love and that his mercy endureth to completeness—to the full limit to which mercy could be of service, benefit or advantage, to the completion, when every ear shall have heard, every eye shall have seen and every heart shall have shown appreciation, shall have come to a knowledge of the grace of God in Jesus Christ our Lord. Let us, as day after day rolls by, remember our threefold relationship then to this Temple: (1) We are still in process of preparation as living stones. (2) As members of the Royal Priesthood carrying the Ark we are marching from the Tabernacle into the Temple condition: some of our number have already entered in and some are still on the way. (3) As the Lord's people the time has come for us to know, to sing with the spirit and understanding, the new song of divine mercy, justice, love and truth. Let us be faithful in each of these respects, fulfilling our parts, and ere long our course will be ended and the glory of the Lord will fill the Temple. It will be after this that the people will

take up the refrain,—for his mercy endureth forever—to completeness.

Our Golden Text is in line with the foregoing. Those who hear the invitation to become members of the house of God, the house of sons, the antitypical Temple, and who receive the invitation into good and honest hearts, are indeed made glad, "Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound." We couple with this a similar expression by the same poet prophet, who declares, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Not in earthly houses, not in earthly temples, do we hope to dwell forever; but those who become members, living stones in the spiritual house, the heavenly Temple now under construction, will indeed dwell in the house of the Lord forever. For them to go out would mean the destruction of the house, for of it they will be members in particular; as the Lord declares they will be pillars in the house of the Lord, and the ministers of his grace and truth to all the people. This text will be true also of the world during the Millennial age. All mankind will then be invited to approach the Lord in worship, to approach the spiritual Temple, the Christ, and through the Christ to approach the Father; and all who shall hear that message and who shall obey it will be glad indeed, even as the message brought by the angels at the birth of Jesus intimated that eventually the tidings of great joy shall be unto all people.

## A GREATER THAN SOLOMON

1 KINGS 10:1-10.—DECEMBER 20.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"When the righteous are in authority the people rejoice."—Prov. 29:2.

By the time Solomon had reached his fortieth year, under the blessing of wisdom which he craved of the Lord, he had made the kingdom of Israel famous throughout the then civilized world. His kingdom connected with Egypt on the south, with the desert on the east and the Mediterranean Sea on the north and west, except that small portion known as Phoenicia, whose king, Hiram, had made a league with Solomon and assisted him greatly in the materials and workmen for the temple. Solomon's ships and those of Hiram were known to all the nations of that time as far east as Judea and as far north west as Britain. The account of the wealth which flowed to him is astounding. His table dishes were made of gold, a thousand shields for his mighty men were of gold, and other things in proportion were magnificent in the largest degree. The brilliancy of his mind found expression not only in financial channels, but his army was equipped on a scale of equal magnificence. Fourteen hundred chariots were imported, and thousands of horses for these and for a cavalry detachment for his army. Literary matters were not neglected; he wrote many sonnets and spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his fame in respect to these matters had extended to all parts of the world.

Our lesson deals specially with the visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon's court. She herself declares that she had heard of his fame and had come to see him with her own eyes, and that notwithstanding her great expectations she found that not one-half of his greatness had been told her. The distance she came is estimated at 1,500 miles, and as the means for traveling was by camels, and their average speed twenty miles per day, it is estimated that the journey to Jerusalem and back to her home consumed five months; besides whatever time she spent at Solomon's court. Unquestionably it would be much less inconvenient today to journey around the earth than it was for the Queen of Sheba to visit Solomon.

Tradition tells us that the Queen sent her ambassadors with a letter to King Solomon before she went herself. With them she sent 500 youths dressed as maidens, with instructions that they were to behave accordingly in the presence of Solomon. She sent also a thousand costly rugs inwrought with gold and silver, and a crown composed of finest pearls and gold hyacinths; also camel-loads of musk, amber, aloes and other precious products of South Arabia. She added a closed casket containing an unperforated pearl, a diamond intricately pierced and a crystal goblet. A letter accompanied these gifts as follows: "As a true prophet thou wilt no doubt be able to distinguish the youths from the maidens and divine the contents of the enclosed casket, to pierce the pearl and thread the diamond and to fill the goblet with water that has not dropped from the clouds nor gushed forth from the earth."

The legend declares that when this embassy reached Jerusalem King Solomon told the bearers the contents of the letter before they presented it, and made light of their mighty problems. He caused the thousand slaves to wash their hands and faces and from the manner in which they applied the water detected their sex. He directed a fiery young horse to be ridden through the camp at the top of speed, and on its return caused

its copious perspiration to be collected in a goblet. The pearl he pierced by some process known to him. The threading of the diamond with its crooked perforation puzzled him for a moment, but at length he inserted a small worm, which wound its way through, leaving a silken thread behind it. He dismissed the ambassadors without receiving their presents. When the emissaries reached the Queen of Sheba, their reports of these matters determined her to visit King Solomon in person. The account of her visit and her astonishment are recorded in this lesson.

We are not informed as to the character of her questions, many of which quite probably were in the nature of conundrums, after the custom of that time. Everything connected with this story, however, assures us that Solomon was truly a wonderful man, that his mental powers were great and active. Nothing illustrates this better than the useful and expensive water works and arrangements which he provided for the capital city. So far as is known these were the first of the kind in the world and very much resembled the superior arrangements of our day. The fact that, although constructed 2,500 years ago, they have recently been partially put into operation again, indicates clearly the solidity of their construction. Truly we see that the Lord's promise to the King was abundantly fulfilled, that he was wiser and richer than all others of his day and subsequently. The Queen was attracted specially by the sumptuous and methodical arrangements of the King's palace, his provision for the ministers of the realm, their uniform, etc., and the grand stairway which led up to the Temple. The expression "There was no more spirit in her," corresponds very closely to an expression of our day—it took her breath away.

Our Lord indicated what otherwise would not have been quite apparent—namely, that Solomon's wisdom and glory, prosperity and peace, were typical; that the antitype of the Solomon is the Christ. Our Lord spoke as never man spoke, the people marveled at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth, and his fame during the three and one-half years of his ministry spread abroad;—yet so far from being recognized by his own people he was crucified as an enemy of their nation and an enemy of God. Referring to the matter he says, "The Queen of Sheba shall rise up in judgment with this generation and shall condemn it; for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon is here."—Matt. 12:42.

By these words the Lord indicated his approval of the desire for wisdom evinced by the Queen. Indeed this is the spirit of the Scriptures—growth in knowledge, grace and love, knowledge being essential to the development of character. Here we have set before us a lesson which our Lord taught in the words, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled"—blessed are they who hunger and thirst for wisdom, for knowledge, for understanding of the good and true, knowing that they shall be blessed of the Lord and shall find that which they seek. The Lord's words were a reproof for his own nation and indicated that they were careless, indifferent respecting the truth. It is still more important for us of today to notice that the same spirit of

indifference prevails in nominal spiritual Israel. As the slightest suggestion of the heavenly wisdom manifested in our Lord's words and deeds should have kindled enthusiasm and zeal in nominal Israel, which would have hungered and thirsted for the truth and by seeking would have found the truth, so likewise today what confidence we have respecting the Lord and his character and plan should awaken every spiritual Israelite and lead him to seek the great fountain of wisdom.

And as at the first advent the "Israelites indeed" were attracted to the Lord and learned of him, so in spiritual Israel those who are Israelites indeed are attracted to the Lord and are taught of him today; but as the Israelites at the Lord's first advent were few in number as compared with the professing nation, so the Spiritual Israelites of today are few in number compared to the millions of nominal Christendom. But as it was not until after Solomon had built the great Temple of God at Jerusalem that his fame was spread abroad and his greatness manifested, so with the antitype Christ; not until he, the antitypical Solomon, has erected the great Temple of God, which is the church—not until it shall have been filled with the divine glory as the new creation—not until the new Jerusalem shall shine resplendently with the riches of divine grace and the brilliancy of the Lord's polished jewels, will the fame of Emmanuel reach to the uttermost parts of the earth. Then, as the Scriptures declare, "Many peoples shall go and say, Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Israel; he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth out of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem"—Isa. 2:2, 3.

All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. The whole world shall have its eyes opened to behold the riches of divine grace and wisdom embodied in Christ, head and body reigning in the New Jerusalem for the blessing and uplifting of the entire race of Adam—whosoever wills. The knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the face of the great deep, and there shall be no need to say every man to his neighbor and every man to his brother, Know thou the Lord, because all shall know him from the least even unto the greatest. (Isa. 11:9; Jer. 31:34) The wisdom of the great King, the antitype of Solomon, will be exercised on behalf of not merely the one nation of Israel but on behalf of all those who shall come into covenant relationship with the heavenly Father, typified by this people which entered into a covenant with the Lord, and which because of that covenant was the object of his mercy and care. In Revelation a little glimpse of the New Jerusalem is given and of the greater than Solomon who will be the light of it, and we are told that the nations shall walk in the light of it and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it—Rev. 21:22, 24.

The Queen's astonishment at what she found, and her declaration that the half had not been told her, reminds us of the Scriptural declaration respecting the greater than Solomon and the wonderful kingdom glories in reservation for his faithful. We read: "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath in reservation for them that love him." Now we know in part and see as through an obscure glass, but then we shall see as we are seen and know as we are known, and be like our Lord and share his glories.—1 Cor. 2:9; 13:12

The Queen's exulting remarks at the conclusion of her visit were, "Happy are thy men, and happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee and hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the Lord thy God which delighteth in thee to set thee on the throne of Israel; because the Lord loved Israel forever, therefore made he thee King to do judgment and justice."

The greater than Solomon, in harmony with the divine arrangement, has prepared to have his faithful servants of the present time with him to share his glory and his kingdom, and the blessings of that time will be specially theirs. Happy those men who will be in his presence, who will see him as he is and be like him, and be the recipients of his favors. O blessed thought! O words with heavenly wisdom fraught!

And although the blessings of the Millennial kingdom will come first and chiefly to the church of this Gospel age, which will be associated with the Lord in the kingdom glory and sit at meat with him and participate in his honors and be blessed by his presence and wisdom, yet indeed a great blessing will remain for the world. As the Queen expressed it of the typical King, that God's blessing upon Israel was manifested in choosing him for King, so God's blessing to the world of mankind will be manifested in the establishment of Messiah's kingdom, which is to bless all the families of the earth and to grant them an opportunity of coming back to covenant relationship with God, and thus eventually, if they will be obedient to his judgments and justice, back to all that was lost in Adam, with superadded favors and mercies.

By faith some of us have heard of the Lord's fame in advance of the establishment of his Kingdom; by faith some of us have come from afar and offered him our treasures, laying our all at his feet; by faith these have been accepted of him, and instead he has given us exceeding great and precious promises and hopes far outweighing and outvaluing the little all that we gave to him.

Although Solomon's wisdom and greatness and riches and honor as the king typified the greatness of the Christ in the Millennial kingdom, his subsequent manifestation of weakness, causing the decay of his greatness, is not to be esteemed as typical, for of the antitype it is declared that of the greatness of his kingdom there shall be no end. Nor is this type alone in this particular. Similarly David was a type in some particulars; so was Moses a type in some particulars and not in others; so was Adam a figure of him who was to come, yet not a figure in his transgression and condemnation. Our Golden Text can only have a partial application to any kingdom of man during "this present evil world," of which Satan has attempted control as the prince thereof. Owing to the inherent weakness of our race even its best specimens are far from absolute righteousness, and consequently no government of the present time, no government under imperfect men, can fulfill the predictions of our Golden Text. This is implied throughout the entire Scripture, in which the Lord promises that he will establish his kingdom amongst men, and that under Emmanuel's government all the families of the earth shall be blessed. It is for this reason that the Lord's people still pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as in heaven;" it is for this reason that the Apostle declares that the "whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now"—waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.

The sons of God, the little flock with their Head the Lord Jesus, will by and by constitute the righteous who will be in authority, in power, in governmental control of the world by divine arrangement, based upon the great atonement sacrifice. Of that time and of that great ruler, head and body, it is written, "In his day shall the righteous flourish." In his day Satan shall be bound a thousand years to deceive people no more, and all the influences of righteousness and truth shall be let loose, that the world may be flooded with the light and knowledge of the glory of God. Under those blessed conditions whosoever will may take of the water of life freely and live forever.

## INTERESTING LETTERS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

It was my privilege to have an interesting conversation with an Adventist preacher a few months ago. The brother referred to being at our home on business, I handed him several "Old Theology Tracts." The next day he called again, and the conversation which took place was in substance as follows:

He said to me: "My dear brother, I have come to your house this afternoon to try, if possible, to rid you of the terrible errors which the tracts you gave me yesterday support."

I replied that I certainly appreciated the brotherly intention, but assured the visitor that his attempt would be fruitless.

"Well," said he, "you will at least talk with me upon the subject."

"Certainly," I replied; "but since I have been in the truth but a few months, and since I am your junior by many years, and not wishing to seem disrespectful, I ask one 'handicap.'"

"On being asked what it was, I told him that I preferred him, instead of attacking my views, to question me concerning

them and allow me to give a reason for the hope within me. He readily acquiesced, stipulating that all views must have a "Thus saith the Lord."

He then asked me concerning our erroneous (?) idea of future probation. I read Acts 3:20; Jno. 1:19; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6; 4:10; Heb. 2:9; etc., and he tried to refute these testimonies by argument and a feeble attempt at quoting Scripture. Then taking his own standpoint I quoted Isa. 65:17-20, and asked him how sinners (according to his belief) could be in the new heavens and earth.

"My dear brother," he replied, "when you reach the 20th verse you should know that God goes away back in his dates hundreds of years."

I replied, "There is one thing sadly lacking in your argument—namely, your stipulated 'Thus saith the Lord.'"

After a painful pause, he said, "I simply cannot quote Scripture today, and my ideas do not seem as clear as usual."