

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

"IN UGLY TEMPER"

FOREBODINGS OF THE DUKE OF BEDFORD

In a letter of apology for absence from the dinner of the Bletchley (Bedfordshire) Working Men's Unionist Association, the Duke of Bedford says:

"The prospects with which 1914 opens are nowhere encouraging. Unrest prevails in every quarter of the habitable globe—from China to Peru. The difficulties of Great Britain are as great as, if not greater than, those of her neighbors, and her means of defense are less, for her Constitution has been deliberately destroyed to serve the cause of party.

"The House of Lords is only retained to supply the Radical Party with money for electioneering purposes. The House of Commons is muzzled and gagged, and the salaried representatives of the constituencies serve the electorate or earn their salaries, not with their brains or their judgment, but with their legs; they walk into the voting lobbies whenever the Government Whips give them their orders. Legislation is a mere question of shoe leather.

"When constitutional safeguards are swept away and no guidance is forthcoming, the only method of expressing discontent which remains is civil war. This is what we are now finding.

"Now a new danger looms before us. It looks as if the problem of naval defense would be shirked, that a body of men led by persons with ostentatiously German names may continue the support of the Radical Party. And meanwhile by assiduous appeals to envy, hatred and greed, Ministers have spoiled the temper of the nation. The nation is not only out of temper, but in an ugly temper."—*London Daily Mail*.

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The foregoing shows some of the troubles of worldly princes and aristocracy. We cannot avoid a feeling of deep sympathy for the aristocracy in their present conditions. Jesus long ago foretold the conditions of our day, saying, especially of the rich and titled, "Men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking forward to the things coming upon the earth"—upon society. Special privileges have so long been enjoyed by the aristocracy that it is only natural that they should feel that these privileges are theirs by divine right.

On the other hand, the world of mankind are learning how the control of the earth came into the possession of so few people in olden times. They are learning that in less civilized times the better educated and more influential gradually gathered property and titles into their own hands. These have been transferred to their children from generation to generation, and laws have been framed which recognize their titles, until now any other laws which in any measure abrogate the title, or limit the special privileges, are felt to be unjust, ungodly—robbery.

Much could be said on both sides of the question. It is ours to consider God's view of the situation and the relationship of the whole to the Golden Rule—the divine law. Viewing matters from this standpoint, the majority can agree that even if there was an excuse in the past for the usurpation of titles, privileges and possessions of land, those privileges would cease with changed conditions. In other words, if there was in the past a time when the masses of the people were too ignorant or too superstitious to appreciate self-government and to exercise it properly, and if at that time it was in the interest of all that the land and the privileges were seized by the more fit of the race for the general welfare, this did not mean that matters must so continue forever. It did mean, rather, that with general education and general fitness for self-government all such privileges should be relinquished or abrogated.

THE PROPER PERSPECTIVE OF THE SITUATION

To state the matter in different terms: If the educated in times past believed that they followed the Golden Rule in seizing land and authority, the same Golden Rule would demand that their power be used in the public interest and welfare—that the public be educated and that, as the masses became capable of self-control, power and authority should be gradually delivered to them. The whole question, according to this standard of the Golden Rule, would therefore be, Have the masses yet attained that degree of development which would permit them to handle their own, or should the aristocracy continue to handle it for them under the plea that the public is not competent—not wise enough to manage its own estate?

Whenever the majority of the people reach the conclusion that they are competent to manage their estate, and whenever they learn that God gave the earth and its fulness not to the few, but to the many—then the people will take up their own inheritance and exercise their own control; and in that propor-

tion the titles of lords, nobles, dukes, kings and emperors will be merely empty reminders of a darker time. Thenceforth, either by Parliaments or Congresses, the people will manage their own affairs, using the ballot for that purpose.

This condition of things, which has been coming upon the world gradually, is evidently quite right, quite in accord with the Golden Rule. True, it would have appeared nobler had the titled aristocracy voluntarily surrendered to the people their rights. But we must remember that all mankind are innately selfish, and hence disposed to look upon matters from the standpoint of their own personal interest and that of their families. It has been fortunate for the world's peace that this turning of their rights over to the people has been proceeding gradually, rather than by violent revolution. Inch by inch the people have been taking back their rights, in proportion as they became intelligent enough to appreciate them. Perhaps sometimes in their zeal, they desired too much or sought to grasp too much, or at least sought to grasp more than they were qualified to use wisely.

No wonder if many of the aristocracy feel deeply grieved, as does the Duke of Bedford. No wonder if many of them have dark forebodings respecting the future. No wonder if it seems to them as if justice is being violated. They have lost the proper perspective of the situation. They fail to see that as elder brothers to the remainder of the race, they should recognize that the masses are no longer "like dumb, driven cattle." They should recognize that a great awakening has come within the last century, and they should be as anxious to turn over the inheritance to their brethren as the latter are anxious to receive it.

THE NATIONS HURRYING TO ARMAGEDDON

The political battle which has been in progress in Great Britain in recent years, and especially within the past two years, is exciting the astonishment of the world. Kings and princes and nobles are in alarm, fearful of the results. The Bible alone makes the situation clear. It alone shows us that the wonderful changes of our day are incidental to the transfer of the kingdoms of this world to become the kingdom of God's dear Son.

We should not be misunderstood, however: We have no thought that the change of parties or of party leaders or of party policies in Great Britain, or in any other nation, will make that nation a holy nation, a member of the kingdom of God. Indeed, we have no reason to believe that Socialists as a whole would or could give the world the blessing of perfect earthly government, establish human rights, etc. On the contrary, we are to remember that while kings and princes have ruled sometimes with a heavy hand, nevertheless, in recent years at least, they have found it necessary to give the people and their interests greater consideration than ever before; and that their experience and their education doubtless qualify them above the average of their fellows for the management of large questions of national import.

Besides, the sudden change would involve not only great hardship to these lords of the land, but probably great distress and hardship to the masses as well. Indeed, this is just what the Bible points out to us. We are living in the time of Christ's presence. The selection of the church of Christ to be the bride-consort in the kingdom is nearly completed. The kingdom will, therefore, soon be established. But those possessed of the power and authority, not realizing this, are holding fast to all that was seized by their forefathers under different conditions.

To our understanding, the Bible teaches that this conflict of interests is about to precipitate a great time of trouble, the like of which never was before. (Daniel 12:1) Nobody wants the trouble, everybody will be injured by it, and yet everybody is rushing toward it. Both the aristocracy and the masses are goaded on by fear. The former fear the loss of their earthly all; the latter perceive that the money of the world, and the land, the basis of all wealth, are in possession of the aristocracy.

The masses realize that, with the bountiful blessings which God has been pouring out upon the world during the past century through increase of knowledge and invention, the world is becoming fabulously rich; and that these riches are gravitating toward the same hands that control the land. They are fearful that if they do not improve the opportunities now passing, they or their children will in time again become slaves or serfs. Hence the turmoil of speech and the conflict between classes, which are hurrying us toward the vortex of the great Armageddon.—Revelation 16:16.

MAN'S EXTREMITY GOD'S OPPORTUNITY

Although we are powerless to hinder either party, we are deeply interested in both, and sympathetic toward both; our

own best consolation and the best which we can offer to either party of the strife is that which we get from the Bible. It tells us that in the darkest hour, when human passion will have reached its climax in anarchy, there still will be hope—the brightest of all hopes. Following the dark hour of trouble will come the glorious sunrise of the Millennial kingdom, scattering earth's ignorance and superstition. Then the kingdom, taking a firm hold upon the race, will properly conduct humanity to the full heights of perfection lost in Eden, but redeemed for all at Calvary. With such a hope we may well possess our souls in peace, awaiting so glorious an outcome of the divine plan.

Although we are not to be active in the strife on either side, we cannot be without deep interest in both sides; and we must, to the extent of our opportunities and influence, tell the good tidings of the coming kingdom to as many of the warriors in that battle as may have the hearing ear. To whatever extent they shall be able to hear, to believe, they will have blessing, peace, comfort. It is the portion of the church to be faithful to the principles of the divine character and to make known the divine program, to bind up all the broken-hearted with the blessed message of divine mercy and to teach all the lesson of patient endurance, loyalty and faithfulness. It is ours, as the Apostle says, to "do good unto all men, but especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

Whether or not the climax of this trouble should be reached in 1915, is not for us to say. We should even have no wish on the subject, except that God's will shall be done. As we note the rapid changes which have taken place in the public sentiment in Great Britain within the past year, we cannot doubt that if the Gentile Times expire with the close of this year, 1914, a very short period might accomplish the full inauguration of the day of wrath, in which, as foreshown in Bible imagery, the ecclesiastical heavens and the political earth will be consumed in a wild revolution of human passion, which will thoroughly melt, or disintegrate, the elements composing the present order of things—the social element, the political element, the financial element, the ecclesiastical element. We know, however, that the great God of love is so wise that he has known long in advance every feature of the great conflict and conflagration; and that his arrangements are ample for the arrest of the trouble in due time, by the establishment of the kingdom of his dear Son with great and glorious power.

WE FULFIL OUR PROMISE

We had expected that if the Gentile Times should end with the present year, this would surely mean that all the bride class would participate in the first resurrection change from earthly conditions to heavenly conditions before the end of the present year. Although this was not stated positively, it was pointed out to be the logical conclusion. Now it does not look so. We see Scriptures which are not yet fulfilled and which, we are convinced, could not find accomplishment before the end of this year.

Of course, our conviction along this line is no stronger than it previously was in the opposite direction. Of course, with God all things are possible. Of course, the Scriptures most distinctly tell us that the catastrophe will come suddenly—"as travail upon a woman with child"—at a moment as unexpected to the mother as to others. Hence it is not impossible that all of our expectations may be realized before the end of this year. We consider, however that this is highly improbable. We desire all of our readers to know this, whatever influence it may have upon their plans and arrangements.

As for the Editor, he will be just as pleased to have the Lord's will done in the one way as in the other. Indeed, if allowed to have a voice in the deciding of the matter, we would feel afraid to exercise such a privilege. The poet has expressed the thought, saying:

"We are afraid to touch
Things which involve so much."

If the year shall pass without a special manifestation of divine favor toward the church in the way of resurrection change from earthly to spiritual nature, we shall know that we erred in judgment in respect to the time when this glorious event might be expected. The great fact would still remain, however, that the hope of the church of God is the resurrection change, "when this mortal shall put on immortality"—"changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." If it be the divine arrangement that we should remain longer this side the veil, we doubt not that he will have some service for us to perform here. And whether our service be on this side of the veil or on the other side, we should be fully content, knowing that he is too wise to err; nor should we lament our misunderstandings. Rather, we should be glad and rejoice, and con-

tinue active in the divine service, as glad to serve on one side of the veil as on the other, with the assurance that God's will is being done in us.

There is still a possibility that we have made no mistake in respect to the time, but have erred in respect to the things expected. For instance, it may be that the Times of the Gentiles do expire with the present year, but that the Lord will not dispossess them nor take from them their earthly dominion so quickly as we had anticipated. Considering that they have been in power for 2,520 years, dispossession in one year might seem very sudden—indeed, to accomplish it in five, or ten, or twenty years, might seem not an unreasonable time.

WATERS OF EUPHRATES DRYING UP CHURCH LIFE IN GERMANY Revelation 16:12

Germany is being overwhelmed with a deluge of infidelity, unparalleled in its entire history. The Monist Federation is endeavoring to draw together the cultured strata of the people into a solid phalanx against Christianity. The Social Democrats are pushing the general masses into a fanatical hatred of church and state, and in the pulpits a Liberalism is spreading, which is almost utterly devoid of the spirit of the Gospel.

While in believing circles earnest efforts are being put forth for individual salvation, and Mission Work is being done amongst the people, to stem the destructive tide, it becomes more evident every day, that "the State Church is doomed in her struggle with Infidelity."

General strike against the church is the latest slogan. The "No-Creeders" (Monists) in league with the Socialists, convened mass meetings in Berlin, Brunswick and Saxony, in which every means of incitation was employed in an appeal toward a secession from the State Church. At these meetings over 1,300 persons signed a declaration announcing their intention to secede from the church. Four thousand more followed, and according to judicial court-records received towards the end of December, 17,000 secessions took place in December up to the 23d, and the day after Christmas 8,000 more announced their intention. These are alarming figures!

To the Socialists the Church Boycott is a political campaign issue. They aim at depriving the church of her revenues and thus result in her overburdening the state.

The following press reports may serve as a typical illustration of the mode of procedure in such meetings. Said Dr. Liebknecht: "The church (especially the Prussian State Church) is not a religious, but a purely political institution. She constitutes a blasphemy against the claims of early Christianity. She does not aim at the closer union and development of man with man, but is a conscious instrument of the ruling class for the oppression of the masses, and blandly supports the capitalistic element under the protection of the state. As such the church is additionally a bulwark of militarism. On the other hand, the so-called Christian Prussian State is merely a state of classes, reared upon the canonization of those 'treasures which moth and rust corrupt.' To belittle this Prussian State is therefore our aim. One means to that end is a strike en masse, which is inevitable.

"In the meantime, however, the 'Church Boycott' is a still more convenient and none the less effective means as a political onslaught. Thereby the church can eventually be starved financially. Whoever has severed with the church at heart, and continues to remain in her, is a hypocrite. Come out of the Prussian Military church! Away from the church and thus from the Prussian Feudal State!" Thundering applause followed this reasoning.

The second Socialist speaker of the day summed up the matter thus: "Whoever does not secede from the church, with which he has nothing in common, is a scoundrel! Every Socialist must secede, for the church combats Socialism by every available means."

The Post writes: "We attended one of the twelve Mass Meetings convened by the 'No Creeds.' We looked forward beforehand to an uncomfortable evening. Nor shall we say anything respecting the vitriolic remarks of the two speakers, who had not a single commendatory word for the church, and seemed to know only clerics, but no ministers. The painful fact was more than apparent, that Socialism is merely another name for infidelity. But one thing really horrified us: Such a degree of vulgarity, such degeneracy of mind, we had not deemed possible! Without exception, every one who even by vague allusion, ventured to take a stand for his church was howled down, hissed from the rostrum and subjected to filthy invectives. While appealing to the true, inner sentiments of man, supposing that every man must at least hold a faith in something higher, 'Whew!' burst from a thousand throats, piercing whistles were given, and loud hoots and guffaws

greeted such an accession. It seemed as if one were in an assembly of criminals, and not amongst men of feeling and sense.

"To illustrate: When a minister ascended the platform, the following was heard, 'He looks it!' 'Old Sky-pilot!' And from another part of the hall the same evening we heard the following words aimed at the ministers: 'Damned Rags!' 'Pig-priests!' A gentleman who interrupted was yelled at 'Rous mit the Parsonface!' At one time a vulgar interjection reached our ears, one from the 'underworld,' wholly unfit for print.

"The ministers had been invited. A few courageous men ran the gauntlet, and undertook the difficult task of obtaining a hearing amidst these roaring waves. Then one of them ascended the rostrum, a spirited character, whose mild facial expression alone invited reconciliation; with quiet, well-weighed words (Pastor Le Seur from Gross Lichterfeld, Berlin), attempted to make clear to the assembly the seriousness of the problem, with which unscrupulous agitators were here playing football. He frankly admitted that the State Church manifested serious fault. He withdrew amidst a flood of derision, ridicule and insults. Then came a woman of the working

class. She yelled to the ministers, who stood close to the speaker's chair: 'I can believe in ten thousand devils in this world, but not in your God, Sir Pastor!' And the masses yelled applause."

In the *Vossische Zeitung*, Prof. Oswald, President of the Monist Federation, expressed the aim which he pursues in the Secessional Movement, as follows: "Thus far all attempts for emancipation from church rule through science have been confined to the comparatively small 'upper strata' of the cultured. The present movement is characterized, in that it takes hold, not only of the influential, but an exceedingly large number of our people, amongst organized labor. If the present movement assumes the proportion of an avalanche, which is very probable, in a short time it will be no more a question of thousands or tens of thousands, but of millions."

In an article, "Decay of the State Church," *Die Welt* writes in conclusion: "The rule of the 'Liberals' incites the 'Positives' to leave the State Church. While on the other side, 'Indifferents' are leaving in ever-increasing numbers. As a result, we may finally reach a state of things in Berlin, when the State Church will collapse."—Translation from *Der Apologete*, Cincinnati, Ohio.

"NOW IS OUR SALVATION NEARER"

St. Paul wrote, "Now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed." (Romans 13:11.) God's people of today are surely justified in expressing the same sentiments. The salvation of the church through the glorious "change" of the first resurrection is nearing every day, we are sure, even though we do not know exactly how many days still remain before that glorious consummation. So also the world's salvation—the world's rescue from Satan, sin and death—is nearing every day, notwithstanding the fact that we cannot say positively just what day or hour Satan will be fully bound for a thousand years and the Messianic blessings begin to supplant and to roll away the curse which for six thousand years has rested as a great pall over humanity—a dark night, soon to give place to the glorious Millennial day and the bright-shining of Messiah's kingdom.

Nothing could shake our faith in the divine plan of the ages epitomized in God's great oath-bound Covenant made with Abraham, confirmed unto Isaac and Jacob and Israel. There is absolutely no ground for questioning that all the families of the earth will eventually be blessed. There is no room to doubt that God has laid a broad foundation for that blessing in the sending of his Son, who became man's Redeemer. There is no reason for questioning the fact that the church for more than eighteen centuries has been called out of the world to be sharer with her Lord in the sufferings of this present time and in the glories that are to follow.

There is absolutely no question about the fact that "faithful is he who called us, who also will do it." We have his promise that "if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ" our Lord. We have the divine Word that Jesus the Head and the church his body, Jesus the Bridegroom and the church his bride, constitute the antitypical spiritual seed of Abraham, through whom, when glorified, God's blessing will be poured upon humanity. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29), which promise reads, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."—Genesis 12:3; 28:14.

There is absolutely no ground for Bible students to question that the consummation of this Gospel age is now even at the door, and that it will end as the Scriptures foretell in a great time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation. We see the participants in this great crisis banding themselves together under the leadership of Capital and Trusts, Labor and Trade Unions. The great crisis, the great clash, symbolically represented as a fire, that will consume the ecclesiastical heavens and the social earth, is very near.

But when we have said this we have said about all that it is safe or proper for us to say. We have never claimed inspiration nor prophetic vision. All that we have ever claimed is that "Wonderful things in the Bible we see," and that the dearest is the love of the heavenly Father and our heavenly Lord Jesus, and that the time for the establishment of the kingdom is very nigh.

CHRONOLOGY BASED UPON FAITH

We remind our readers here that in these columns and in the six volumes of *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES* we have set forth everything appertaining to the times and seasons in a

tentative form; that is to say, not with positiveness, not with the claim that we knew, but merely with the suggestion that "thus and so" seems to be the teaching of the Bible. The Berean Lessons are running now in Volume second of *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES* in order that all of our readers may have fresh in mind, the Bible chronology as furnished there in Chapter II. We have pointed out that the chronology is the basis of nearly all the suggestions of prophetic interpretations set forth in *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*. We have pointed out there that the chronology of the Bible is not stated with great clearness, that fractions of years are ignored and that there are certain breaks in it.

We have suggested that ordinarily the chronology would be quite insufficient as evidence and that our acceptance of it is based on faith—on the supposition that God wished to give us a chronology, wished that we might have some knowledge of the times and seasons, and yet wished that it might be so obscure and indefinite as to require faith on the part of his people. We pointed out further that we could not exercise that faith were it not for the fact that this chronology seems to be interwoven and interlocked with numerous prophecies—and these prophecies, in turn, interwoven and interlocked with other prophecies and fulfillments not dependent upon the chronology. Having thus set the matter before the minds of our readers, we asked each to judge for himself as to how much faith he would repose in the chronology and in the application of the prophecies connected with it. We announced that to our own mind it seemed reasonable to accept the chronology and the prophecies from this viewpoint.

Having laid this broad foundation, having put all of our readers on notice to use their own judgment, we proceeded to use this chronology in connection with the various prophecies, drawing various hypotheses and conclusions. We did not in any case remind the reader afresh that all these conclusions were based upon the chronology, and that the chronology is admittedly supported by faith. We assumed that all intelligent readers realized this, and that all such were using their own judgment, not ours, in respect to the chronology and in respect to the applications of the prophecies along the lines of that chronology. We ask you all still to do this.

The chronology still seems as strong as ever to the Editor. He sees nothing to alter or amend. Nevertheless, the Editor wishes to put all *THE WATCH TOWER* readers on notice, as he already has done twice this year, that to his judgment it now seems unreasonable to expect during the present year all that he had anticipated, as suggested previously. He sees no possibility that the Church Federation will reach its climax of organization and power, and then reach its fall, during the remaining months of this year. And he surely looks for this to occur prior to the full ending of this Gospel age and the glorification of the last members of the church, which is the body of Christ.

This does not prove the chronology wrong, nor does it prove that the Times of the Gentiles do not end with this year. It may be that Gentile Times will end before the ecclesiastical oligarchy attains sacerdotal power. We must wait and see. The Lord is still our Shepherd. No good thing will he withhold from those who follow him as his sheep, harkening to his voice and ignoring the voice of strangers. His prom-

ises will stand sure, and these, as all other things, shall work together for good to those who love him—the called ones according to his purpose.—Romans 8:28.

A SCRIPTURE TO BE FULFILLED

The Lord declares through the Prophet David (Psalm 149:5-9): "Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgments written. This honor have all his saints." Heretofore we had not questioned that this description of the glory of the saints applied to them beyond the veil—beyond the completion of the first resurrection. But a more careful investigation of the words forewarns us that we may not be too sure in such a supposition. We suggest as a bare possibility that a time may come when a part of the saints will be in glory beyond the veil, and when those on this side the veil in the flesh will enter very fully into the joys of their Lord and into participation in his work.

If we interpret the statement, "let them sing aloud upon their beds," in harmony with the significance of similar statements elsewhere in the Scriptures, the expression would signify that the saints in glory will be telling the good tidings of great joy—singing, presenting in melodious cadences the messages which none can learn except the one hundred and forty-four thousand. But the word beds here, in harmony with usage elsewhere in the Bible, would signify a rest of faith—that these saints were at rest in the midst of conditions to the contrary. This could hardly be the case if the reference be to those who have experienced the first resurrection "change." Theirs will not be a rest of faith, but an absolute entering into rest.

Again, while the high praises of God are in their mouth they have the two-edged sword in their hand, according to the prophecy. This "two-edged sword" is evidently, as elsewhere, the Word of God. We can scarcely imagine the saints beyond the veil as handling the Word of God. On the contrary, this would seem to imply that the saints described are on this side of the veil, using the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, in connection with the showing of high praise to God—clearing his name from the dishonor attached to it through the ignorance, superstition and creeds of the dark ages.

The next statement, that these saints will use the "sword" to execute vengeance upon the Gentiles and punishments upon the people [of Israel], seems to imply that these saints, whatever their condition, will be in authority; for the Scriptural injunction to them elsewhere is that they should "judge nothing before the time." This Psalm, therefore, describes the

time when they are to do a judging work in respect to the world in general, as well as in respect to Israel, God's people.

A SOMEWHAT SIMILAR SCRIPTURE

A somewhat similar description of The Christ in glory is given us in Revelation 19:11, where he that is called "Faithful and True" goes forth in righteousness to judge and make war. The heavenly armies follow him (V. 14), and out of his mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations.—V. 15.

We know not why this prophecy speaks of heavenly armies—in the plural. We merely suggest that the heavenly army may possibly be in two divisions—one on this side of the veil, the other on the other side of the veil. We are waiting to see, and merely watching while we wait, and noting with possibly still greater care our Father's Word. We may be sure that if any commission be given to the Lord's people to execute judgment this side of the veil it would be so explicit as to leave no room for doubt, remembering that the divine requirement throughout the age has been that the saints of God shall be subject to the powers that be. Any change from this order to the effect that we should execute judgments upon them will need to be very positively and very clearly understood before being executed.

Just how the kings and nobles—financial, political and social—will be bound, and just what kinds of fetters of strength will be used, we may not know until qualified; but the outworking of all these will be, as expressed in Psalm 149:9, "to execute upon them the vengeance written; this honor have all of God's saints." Whether we participate in this work on this side of the veil or on the other side makes no difference to us. In any event, whatever we shall do at any time under the guidance of the Lord's holy Spirit will be in harmony with justice and all the time intermingled with sympathetic love. None except those possessing and controlled by this, the holy Spirit of God, will ever be permitted participation in the kingdom glories and power.

"Be patient and submissive—strength is given
For every step along the weary way.
And for it all thou'lt render praise to heaven,
When dreary night gives place to perfect day.

"Yes, perfect day, the day of God eternal,
When not a shadow shall flit o'er the scene
In that fair land where all is bright and vernal,
And we will be with Christ and naught between.

"Wait, then, dear heart; control thy sad emotion;
God will subdue each angry wind and wave;
And when the voyage ends across life's ocean
Within the haven of sweet rest will save."

THE PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION

We are being swamped with applications for the Photo-Drama. Evidently the whole country wants it. Not only is our supply of pictures inadequate, but we could not have nearly enough operators to meet the demand; and the rent for the theatres would be impossible for us to pay.

Under these conditions we shall be limited at first to the larger places. Later on, the Drama can be extended to smaller places. But do not expect too much; we cannot work miracles. Before the summer is ended we hope to have the work so expanded as to be able to reach many more cities and towns. Our plan for the present must be to prepare duplications of the Drama and to offer it free with booth operator to such cities

as indicate their ability, willingness and desire to furnish suitable auditoriums, supply ushers, etc. Please exercise a little patience. Be assured the Society is doing all in its power to serve you and the truth. Do not spend money going afar to see the Drama, but save your dimes to assist in getting it to your own town.

We are pleased to remark that the public is taking a deep interest in the Drama, recognizing its educational value, the beauty of the pictures and the wider scope which it gives of human history. Unencumbered brethren of fair education and of experience as newspaper writers may be used in the work. We shall be glad to hear from volunteers.

WHO COMMITS THE SIN UNTO DEATH?—PART II

Besides the two classes of those who are saved among the spirit-begotten, there is a third class—those who go into the second death. The "sin unto death" is not only a failure to do something which is good, but a positive doing of something which is evil. The great company do not turn to wallow in the mire of sin; but this class now spoken of is a class of spirit-begotten ones that gradually turn from their covenant until they fall away entirely. They become covenant-breakers. They have covenanted to lay down their lives, and then they break that covenant, and turn again to sin and to hopeless darkness. This course, being a sin against clear light and knowledge, is a sin unto death.

Who or what is it that sins the sin unto death? "Who-soever is begotten of God doth not commit sin [wilfully]; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin." That which is begotten of God is the new mind, the new will; and the person having that new will, desiring to be in harmony with God, cannot sin the sin unto death as long as he has

the mind, the will, the Spirit, of God. As long as his will is in harmony with God he cannot sin with wilfulness and desire. He cannot be in harmony with sin. The new mind cannot consent to sin. If there be a consent to sin, it is an evidence that the old mind has taken control.

We may understand the subject more clearly, perhaps, by considering the action of Congress. Suppose that the Republicans represent the natural man, and that the Republican party had had domination for a long time. Then there came a change of administration. There was a new sentiment, a new mind, there were new aspirations. Another party was in power, and the majority of Congress became Democratic. What made the change in the action of Congress? It was the new vote. The majority carried the day, and decided upon a Democratic form of government to control our Legislative Body. But if Congress should again change and vote the old way, it would no longer be Democratic.

Just so the new creature came into control of our mortal

bodies. Then if the new will should again change, and advocate as before the things of the flesh, the new creature is changed again into the old creature. It is not the new creature, however, that is wallowing in sin. The will has committed the sin unto death. THE NEW CREATURE IS DEAD.

ESAU'S LOSS A WARNING TO THE CHURCH

The illustration used by the Apostle Paul of Esau's seeking vainly with tears to regain his lost birthright, has a lesson of deep interest for us. It may be applied in one way to the condition of the Jewish people, who, having lost the great privilege, or opportunity, of becoming the spiritual Israel of God, could not get again, as a people, the lost opportunity. That privilege had gone from them; they could not recover it, although this would not hinder any individual Jew from becoming repentant and from becoming personally a member of the church class.

However, the Apostle's words (Hebrews 12:16, 17) seem to apply especially to the church, and to our danger of losing our birthright, as new creatures. Esau, "for one morsel of meat sold his birthright." He typified those Christians who barter their glorious inheritance as prospective heirs of the divine nature and the Messianic kingdom for the enjoyment of the fleeting pleasures of the present life—"a mess of pottage!"

WHO COMMITS THE UNPARDONABLE SIN

As to the general proposition respecting unpardonable sin, we have endeavored to point out in STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES that sins are unpardonable in proportion as they are wilful. The only ones, however, who can commit a fully unpardonable sin are those who have come into the church—who have made a consecration of their life and have been begotten of the holy Spirit. If such should fall away, it would be a final matter.

Before coming into Christ, before receiving the holy Spirit, transgressions might have been committed, but these transgressions would not have the same degree of responsibility as would those of a consecrated Christian; for after one has come into the Lord's family, there is an increase of light and knowledge, and therefore there comes increased responsibility. The Lord said that those who knew his will and did it not would receive many stripes; but those who knew it not and did it not would receive fewer stripes. Many of the Lord's people have committed more or less wilful sins, and have received stripes more or less severe.

The Scriptures tell of a degree of wilful sin that would be unto death, and such sin is mentioned as a sin against the holy Spirit. This, we understand, is a sin against clear knowledge—a perception of the wrong, and a transgression of God's law wilfully, deliberately. The Jews who crucified Christ sinned against light and had great responsibility. However, the Apostle Peter says, "I wot, brethren, that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." (Acts 3:17) They realized not that they were crucifying the Lord of glory. But if any begotten of the holy Spirit should join in any similar crime, we understand that this would be a different matter. The penalty upon such spiritually enlightened ones would be nothing short of the second death.

The Apostle Paul points out why the church can sin this sin unto death. He says that if we sin wilfully, after we have received a knowledge of the truth, and have tasted the good Word of God, and have been made partakers of the holy Spirit—if then we should fall away (not if we should stumble, but if we should completely fall away, turning again to sin), it would be like a sow that was washed which returned again to wallow in the mire. In such case, the transgression would be to the full.

DID ADAM SIN AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT?

In answering this question we need to have a clear conception of what constitutes the holy Spirit. The Scriptural answer is that the holy Spirit, in one of God's intelligent creatures, is the spirit of sonship. The brute creation do not have this spirit of sonship. They were not made in the moral image of the Creator. The angels have the spirit of sonship. Adam was created in the moral image and likeness of his Creator—a son of God. Therefore we should understand that he had this Spirit of the Father, the Spirit of sonship.

When Adam became disobedient, it meant a forfeiture of the Spirit of sonship, and the casting of him out from all relationship to the Father. And this relationship to God was forfeited for all his posterity. But God has made an arrangement by which Adam may come back to him—and all his children may come, if they will. This operation of uplifting and restoring mankind is in the Scriptures spoken of as an impartation, or pouring out, of the holy Spirit.

This has not yet come to the world, but is now fulfilled

in the church. The church, accepted to a new nature, under certain special conditions are, during this Gospel age, begotten to sonship and are classed as sons of God. This receiving of the church into the relationship of sons now, and the blessing of the world later, is referred to in the prophecy of Joel. There the Prophet speaks of the Lord as "in those days," pouring out his Spirit upon his servants and handmaids; and he declares that, afterwards, he will pour out his Spirit upon all flesh—that they also may come back into sonship, into relationship with God.—Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:16-18.

Adam had the Spirit of God. It was received in a natural way; and had it not been for the fall, this condition would have been maintained, just as with the holy angels. These angels, not having forfeited this relationship, need not a special impartation of the holy Spirit.

COULD ADAM HAVE REPENTED?

Would it have been possible for Adam to repent, after committing this wilful sin? The word repentance may be used in two different ways. We frequently use the word to mean penitence, sorrow over a fault, etc., but this common use of the word is not its full import. It means to get back, to return to a former condition; or to take an opposite course from that in which one has been going. Adam could have repented in the sense of being penitent; but he could not have repented in the sense of getting back to the place where he was before he sinned. That would require the paying the price of his sin by another. St. Paul said of Esau, that he was a "profane person," and "that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." (Hebrews 12:17) Esau found plenty of opportunity to cry and to be sorry; but he did not find an opportunity to get back that which he had forfeited. And so with Adam.

But such inability to repent is entirely different from what the Apostle means in speaking of the church. He says, "If we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." (Hebrews 10:26, 27) There could be no repentance for these. Their hearts have become too hardened. They cannot be renewed unto repentance. (Hebrews 6:4-8) But the provision for Adam is God's arrangement that Christ should taste death for him. But now, Christ dieth no more; therefore, whoever receives once the benefit of Christ's death and misuses it, comes under the sentence of death a second time, and from this, the second death, there is no recovery.

GROUNDLESS FEARS OF SOME

We believe that the majority of people who think they have committed the sin unto death are merely being tormented by fears; and that in most cases they need only to have better instruction respecting the Lord, his character and arrangement. We have had people come to us in great terror of mind, believing that they had committed the sin unto death, and that there was no hope for their reconciliation to God. Sometimes they have merely told us of their fears, and we were puzzled; for their apparent penitence and regret were favorable signs. In some instances, where they have told us the facts of the case, we have been able in five minutes to relieve them entirely, and to show them that they had altogether misunderstood the matter. This gave them much peace. One person told us that the trouble had lasted for eighteen years. Since then this person has been rejoicing in the Lord and serving him very acceptably.

But the proper thought is that one could not be brought back if he were of the kind that have wilfully and deliberately renounced the Lord. God is looking for a loyal people; and if any show wilful, intentional disobedience, they would not be fit to live at all. However, when we see repentance, we may take a hopeful view.

SIN AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT UNFORGIVABLE

We are to recognize a difference between a sin against the holy Spirit and the sin unto death. In other words, a sin against the holy Spirit may be of various degrees of heinousness in the sight of God. We might think of small sins and of great sins against the holy Spirit. No sin against the holy Spirit is forgivable. But some of these sins might be punished with stripes, and others with death.

The holy Spirit of sonship was not possessed by the Pharisees, to whom Jesus directed his words. But they had some knowledge of the light of the holy Spirit in our Lord's person. The holy Spirit was manifest in him in a remarkable degree. The Jews were in different degrees of condemnation, in proportion as they had the eyes of their understanding open. Those who received a little knowledge, and refused that little, had less responsibility than those who saw more and refused it. And

those who misrepresented him were not so much sinning against him as against the holy Spirit in him.

Our Lord said that all manner of sin and blasphemy would be forgiven men except a sin against the holy Spirit. This would not be forgiven them. The Pharisees, not having been received into God's family, nevertheless had a large measure of light, and therefore a large measure of responsibility. And when they, with much light, misrepresented it, this showed a measure of wilfulness on their part which, Jesus said, would be sure to have punishment. Very few, we may say, at that time, had so full a knowledge that they could be culpable in the fullest sense.

THE SIN OF JUDAS

The sin unto death is a full sin against the holy Spirit, the sin against full light and knowledge, deliberate, wilful sin. We know of only one person who had such full light and full opportunity prior to our Lord's resurrection and the coming of the Pentecostal blessing; and that one person was Judas. His special light consisted in that he not only saw Jesus and saw his miracles, and was a witness of his noble character, but Judas had himself received of this holy Spirit by impartation from Jesus, and had used it, casting out demons, etc.

Jesus said, "Woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born!" (Mark 14:21) Judas had a sufficiency of light, not to condemn him merely to stripes and punishment, but so to condemn him that he would have no further opportunity and hope. He had sinned against very great light. Aside from Judas we know of no other who has ever sinned the sin unto death, except those who may have proven unfaithful after having been begotten of the holy Spirit as new creatures, and who had thus received the mind of God, the holy Spirit.

TREATMENT OF SPIRITUAL SICKNESS

The Scriptures also imply that any who have gotten into a condition of very low spirituality might have a possibility of recovery, not through themselves, but through the ministry of faithful ones of the royal priesthood. The Apostle James speaks of some who are "sick." He says to let such a one call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, and that the prayer of faith shall recover him to God's fellowship—and he adds: "He that converteth [recovereth] a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death." (James 5:20) Apparently that soul is in death's throes; but if he manifest a sufficiency of faith, and will call in some true brethren and humbly confess his sin and ask for prayers, he would seem to be taking a step that would be considered favorably by the Lord, who might give him a further opportunity and trial.

Our thought is that, ordinarily, there would be no need for the individual to confess his trespasses to any one, unless it were to a person who had been trespassed against, and to whom, therefore, apologies would be due. Otherwise our sins are to be confessed only unto the Lord, unless under extreme circumstances, where one had lost fellowship with the Lord, and felt that there was nothing for him otherwise but complete alienation from God. In the latter case, we would advise such a brother to call in the elders of the church and make a confession, that his sin against the holy Spirit may be canceled.

LYING TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Some have asked: Was the sin of Ananias and Sapphira unpardonable? We answer, It was an unpardonable sin; for Ananias and Sapphira are both still lying dead. They may have some future opportunity, so far as we know. It is not for us to determine the degree of wilfulness connected with their wrong-doing. The Lord only would be able to know, and he has not yet manifested his decision. It may be that they were merely cut off from the present life, and will have some opportunity in the future. If they were really begotten of the holy Spirit, this could not be; for all those who are to have a part in the little flock or the great company receive their chastisements and purifying experiences in this life, and none of them will receive any punishment in the future life. The Apostle says we will not come into condemnation with the world. We receive our trial for life or death everlasting in the present time.

In the day of the Apostles, when a partial community of

interest was established, a number of the faithful sold possessions and contributed to the general fund. Although there was nothing compulsory upon any in respect to this selling of property and giving to the common treasury, the very fact that those who did so were highly esteemed in the church would naturally become a snare to some who, without the real spirit of helpfulness and sacrifice, would desire to have the approbation of the brethren.

STARTLING RESULTS OF WILFUL DECEPTION

Ananias and Sapphira were of this class, desirous of the approval of the church, yet deficient in the real spirit of sacrifice. They had a property which they determined to sell; and in order to pose before the believers as saints of a high order, they pretended to give to the general fund the full amount received from the property. Secretly, however, they had much less generous sentiments. They agreed together that they would retain part of the sale-money for future contingencies, yet would pass as sacrificers to the full amount.

The wrong of their course is manifest. As the Apostle Peter declared, the property was their own, and after they had sold it they still had a right to do as they pleased with the proceeds. But they should have been honest about the transaction, and if they wished to give a tenth, a half, or all of the amount, it was a matter of their own business alone, and no one would have had the least right to find fault with or criticize them. The entire wrong consisted in the deception practised—the palming off of a part of the price as the whole, for the purpose of deceiving the church and of gaining applause for an amount of sacrifice more than they made. As St. Peter said, they lied, not to man, but to the holy Spirit of God. In this, and in this alone, consisted the sin for which they died.

The record is that "great fear came upon all the company"—great reverence for God and for the apostles, his representatives. It brought also a realization that consecrations to the Lord were far from meaningless forms. This meant, not only to those who had already espoused the Lord's cause, but also to all who for some time thereafter would identify themselves with the church, that any who were insincere would best make no pretensions to discipleship. Quite probably the influence of the lesson lasted for a considerable time—during the lives of the apostles.

We may consider a lesson which may properly be learned from this incident of the past by the Lord's consecrated people of today. The lesson is that God desires "truth in the inward parts"—in the heart—and that any who have not this quality—candor, honesty, truthfulness—cannot be pleasing to God; and therefore cannot share in the glories to be dispensed shortly to the elect class of this Gospel age.—Psalm 51:6.

As we look at ourselves, we come to realize how imperfect are all the members of the fallen race; and when we consider God's perfection, we can conceive of only one quality that the fallen creature could possess that would meet with divine approval. That one quality is honesty. The true Christian must, in honesty, confess his own shortcomings, his own deficiencies. He must, in honesty, acknowledge that his sufficiency is of God, through Christ, and not of himself. He must honestly strive for the standard set before him in the Gospel. He must honestly admit that he cannot do the things that he would. He must candidly and fully accept the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus, as the covering for his blemishes. We are inclined to the belief that the greatest sin in the church—amongst the consecrated believers—is the sin of dishonesty; the sin for which divine disapproval is so excellently illustrated in the case of Ananias and Sapphira.

This is an individual matter still, as it was in the days of the apostles. Each individual of the Lord's people must answer for his own course, to the Lord himself. It therefore behooves all who are seeking divine approval, to see to it that they are not influenced by the prevalent disposition to hypocrisy, but that they deal with the Lord in purity and honesty of heart. They should see to it that, having covenanted to give to God and his service their all, they keep nothing back, but consider that their time, their influence, their means, their lives, are fully devoted to the Lord, and that they use these as his—as they believe he would wish to have them used—as faithful stewards.

"WHERE ARE THE NINE?"

MAY 31.—Luke 17:11-19.

"Were there none found that returned to give glory to God, save this alien?"—V. 18.

The essence of our lesson for today is gratitude. It is a most reasonable trait of character and is frequently found even in the brute creation. It is impossible to imagine a perfect human being or an angel acceptable to God without this quality. We might almost say that the degree of our acceptance

with God is measured by our gratitude. It leads to obedience to the divine laws and regulations, whether understood or not. It leads to self-sacrificing labors in the service of God, and according to a divine automatic arrangement has its blessings.

Our lesson tells us that the Savior was approaching Jeru-

salem by way of Samaria and Galilee. It is surmised that this was his last journey to Jerusalem, which eventuated in his death. His fame had spread abroad; and ten lepers sitting by the roadside heard that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. Immediately they called to him as loudly as the hoarse whisper of their disease would permit. Ordinarily their appeal was for money; but in this case it was, "Master, have mercy upon us!"

Lepers are a class greatly to be pitied. Their disease has long been considered incurable, and hence in the Bible it is symbolically used to represent sin. It is an affection which seems to corrupt the blood. The joints twist, decay and slough off. Under the regulations prevailing at the time of our lesson, lepers were forbidden to enter the cities, under the penalty of thirty-nine strokes from a rod. They had no means of earning a living, and were always dependent upon the charity of their friends or the public. Nor were they allowed to approach others nearer than about one hundred and fifty feet, for fear of contamination. Theirs was a living death.

The ten mentioned in this lesson were drawn together by their common trouble which ignored the racial barriers between Jews and Samaritans. In answer to their cry for help, Jesus, although full of compassion, seemed to treat their appeal coldly. He merely said to them, "Go show yourselves unto the priests." According to God's arrangement with the Jews under their Law Covenant, they were to have no sicknesses except as these should represent sins; and the priests were to pass judgment upon cases of leprosy, determining whether or not the disease were indeed leprosy, etc. Our Lord's direction that the lepers go and show themselves to the priests implied a healing, and suggested that by the time that they should reach the priest they would be ready to have him pronounce them clean.

The lepers must have had considerable knowledge of the power of Jesus, and must have exercised great faith; for instead of crying out for instantaneous healing, they followed his direction and started for the priest to have an inspection. Doubtless they hoped that by the time they should reach him they would be well and would receive a bill of health. They had gone but a short distance when they found themselves cured. We can well imagine with what joy they hastened to have the priest approve them in order to return to their families, their business, etc. Surely they almost ran, as they felt the exhilaration of the cleansed blood! But one of them slowed up and then turned back; probably the others in their exuberance did not notice this. Back he came and fell at the feet of Jesus, giving him thanks. His was a grateful heart, and we cannot doubt that he will receive a blessing eventually, though he did not receive it then, for he was a Samaritan, an alien, a foreigner from the commonwealth of Israel.

ANOTHER CRUMB OF FAVOR

In his case, the healing was a "crumb from the children's table;" for the rich man had not yet died—God's favor had not yet departed from Israel. Jesus had not yet uttered the fateful words, "Your house is left unto you desolate." Nay, the favor to Israel continued three and a half years after their house was left desolate—individual favor. It was three and a half years after the death of Jesus before the individual favor to the Jews terminated to such an extent as to permit the Gospel to go to the Gentiles—Cornelius being the first to be accepted into fellowship with God.—Acts 10.

Had the returning one been a Jew instead of a Samaritan, no doubt he would have been invited by Jesus to become one of his followers—"Come, take up thy cross and follow me!" But because he was a Samaritan, Jesus merely said to him, "Arise and go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole." We cannot doubt, however, that the Lord's providence followed this grateful Samaritan; and that when the time came for the opening of the door to the Gentiles, he was amongst those who gladly received the message, and made a consecration to become an heir of God and joint-heir with Jesus Christ our Lord to the heavenly inheritance.

We are not to understand that our Lord's words, "Thy faith hath made thee whole," meant that it was the man's faith aside from divine power that made him whole, but rather that it was the Master's using the divine power in connection with the faith of the individual. The power of God and the faith of the man co-operated for his healing. They did the same for the nine others who were healed. They also had faith and were healed, and as Jews under the Law Covenant, they had more ground for asking forgiveness and healing than had the Samaritan.

TEN HEALED—WHERE ARE THE NINE?

Jesus called public attention to the fact that ten were healed, but that only one had returned to give glory to God. True, he had not asked them to come back and offer praise and acknowledge the divine power wrought through him! True, they did what he told them to do—went and showed themselves to the priest—and no more, going then about their business.

Why did he not, before granting the healing, bargain with them, saying, If I heal you, will you consecrate your lives and become my disciples? Undoubtedly they would have agreed to this arrangement. Who would not agree to any terms to be rid of so loathsome and incurable a disease? Why did not Jesus take this method of adding to the number of his disciples? Undoubtedly the answer should be that he was following the spirit of the Father's dealings, which he expressed in the words, "The Father seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth." As the Father seeks no others, so the Son seeks no others.

In this respect the preaching of Jesus and the apostles is in strong contrast with much of the preaching of evangelists, revivalists, etc. Never did Jesus or the apostles urge worldly people to become disciples of Christ. They merely preached, or declared, certain great facts, and accepted those who came under that kind of preaching, influenced by the great facts set forth. They reasoned of sin, of righteousness and of a coming time of decision, or judgment, and left the matter with the individual conscience. They stated that those who forsake sin and turn to God may have forgiveness and reconciliation through the merit of the blood of Christ. They told of a high, or heavenly, call for all such penitents who would consecrate their lives wholly to the service of God, truth and righteousness, willing to endure hardness as good soldiers.

We remember that on one occasion Jesus apparently reproved even a spirit of enthusiasm that might becloud the cool judgment, saying, "Sit down and count the cost." (Luke 14:28) It has pleased God through the preaching of the truth to call out the class which he desires to be joint-heirs with his Son. They are not to be brought into the family of God by prayers or by excitement, but by the declaration of the divine terms and conditions. To such as accept the grace of God the urgent message goes out that they receive it not in vain; that, having put their hand to the plow, they do not look back; that, having enlisted as good soldiers of the Cross, they endure hardness, rejoicing in the privilege of service and sacrifice.

The point we make is that according to the Bible, no attempts were ever made by Jesus and his apostles to obtain recruits for the army of the Lord by a "hip-hip-hurrah" process. In this we are not criticising others, but merely calling attention to facts which have much to do with the guidance of all God's people who seek to know and to do his will.

OTHER TENS, HUNDREDS, THOUSANDS

Let us view the incident of our lesson symbolically. Let the lepers represent sinners who, coming to realize themselves unclean, cry out to the Lord for cleansing, thus impliedly acknowledging his greatness and power as the Son of God, through whom only is forgiveness of sin, and impliedly declaring themselves as desiring to be his followers, his disciples, persuaded that sin is injurious and resolved thereafter to walk in the Lord's footsteps, fighting against sin in themselves and everywhere. How many of the tens, the hundreds, the thousands, whose devotion and faith the Lord has accepted—how many whom he has healed, forgiven and received according to their profession of discipleship—really have become his true followers?

How many who have declared to the Lord their unhappiness, their desire for forgiveness of sins, and promised life-long gratitude and devotion to him, to have his favor, have forgotten their privileges; and after receiving a blessing have gone, one to his field, another to his merchandise, another to pleasure, another to formalism! How few have remembered their prayers to the Lord for mercy, their resolutions in respect to what they would do if their prayers were answered!

A REVIVAL IS IN ORDER

Many Christian people are growing in the opinion that we are living today in a time of crucial trial as respects those who have made a covenant with God. They believe that we are nearing the time when the church, the body of Christ, will be received by the Lord in the resurrection change to be his bride. As the Apostle wrote, "We shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye"; for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." The call of this Gospel age has been to the finding of these who are to constitute the bride class, the associates of Jesus in his kingdom.

Of the Jews Jesus said, in a time of testing in the end of their age, "They knew not the time of their visitation." Only the comparatively few were in the heart condition of nearness to God which enabled them to understand the character of the times in which they were living and the change which was in progress. The thought is that a similar change is upon us now, which is being discerned by those who have had the eyes of their understanding opened.

The Samaritan in our lesson seems to represent a class of grateful followers of the Lord who seek to give him glory in

their words, thoughts and doings, while the majority of those who have similarly received his favor are disposed to pursue the ambitions and pleasures of the present life. Neglecting to take the path which the Master trod, they will not reach the glory, honor and immortality which he attained and to which he has called this class. A lower place must be for them. In a little while, according to the Bible, the glories of the kingdom will be revealed to an astonished world, but the glories of the present condition of affairs will fade away.

MESSIAH'S KINGDOM TO BE INVISIBLE

JUNE 7.—Luke 17:20-37.

“Behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst.”—V. 21.

Our understanding of the Master's words depends considerably upon the setting in which we see them. John the Baptist preceded Jesus and preached the kingdom of God at hand. In due time he pointed out Jesus as the Messiah that should come, the Lamb of God. After waiting for months for Jesus to establish himself as an earthly king, and finding instead that his own work was closing, he was put into prison by Herod. John then sent to Jesus to inquire whether or not he was the one that should come or whether they should look for another. He was disappointed in not seeing evidences of the kingdom, as he had expected.

The scribes and the Pharisees heard of the claim that Jesus was the long-promised King who would set up his Messianic kingdom, and they derided him. They looked at his motley company of followers—publicans and sinners as well as honorable people, but none of special rank, influence or wealth. They considered Jesus a deceiver and his followers dupes. Our lesson tells how they attempted to expose what they supposed was a deception of Jesus, thus to turn away the delusion of his followers. Therefore they asked him in public the question, When will God's kingdom come? How long will it be before you set it up?

Doubtless they purposed to entrap Jesus; for if he should say, A long time, his followers would be disheartened; if he should say, A short time, they would proceed to query, Where will you get your army? How will you pay your soldiers? How will you supply them with food? Will you go to Rome to battle with the powers that be, that our whole nation has been unable to cope with? etc.

But these Pharisees got only as far as their first question, because the answer to it confuted them, and no doubt perplexed them. Jesus answered that God's kingdom would not come with observation; that is to say, when the kingdom should come, people would not see it. Proceeding, Jesus elaborated, saying that when the kingdom of God should be established, people would not see whether it was here or there; for the kingdom of God would be the power of God exerted everywhere in the midst of the people.

Our translation is faulty, though evidently not intentionally so, when it reads, “For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.” The translators, had they noticed carefully, would have been on guard against saying that the kingdom of God was within those Pharisees that Jesus had designated hypocrites, whitened sepulchres, etc. A closer examination of the original would have shown that the text would better be translated, “The kingdom of God is in your midst.”

A kingdom is always represented by its king. Jesus, as the King, was present in their midst, but they did not recognize him. “There standeth One among you whom ye know not.” Similarly, all through the Gospel age, the church of Christ, his “body,” has been undiscerned by the world. “The world knoweth us not, even as it knew him not.” For eighteen hundred years this has been true in this sense; but Christ and the church in the flesh are not the kingdom of God in the full, proper sense that the Bible promises it—a kingdom of power and great glory. Christ and the church have been only the incipient kingdom, an embryotic kingdom—the kingdom class, preparing for investiture of authority in God's due time, which we believe is now near.

The kingdom is to be a spiritual one, and hence its rulers will be as invisible as are the angels and the heavenly Father. Jesus declared, “Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more.” What was true of the Head will be true of every member of the elect body of Christ, the church. “Changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,” the world will see them no more; “for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God,” and flesh and blood cannot see that which is spiritual.

During the Millennium, the kingdom authority and power of God through Christ and the church will be exercised amongst men; and yet they will not see it with the natural eye, but merely with the eyes of their understanding. All the blind eyes

The true wisdom that cometh from above was manifested by our Savior, who counted not his life dear unto him, who freely made himself of no reputation that he might do the Father's will, and who is now highly exalted as a reward. St. Paul expressed the same thought, saying that he counted all things as but loss and dross that he might win a place in the body of Christ—the church in glory beyond the veil. Great as will be the blessings of the Millennial kingdom to the world, the blessings which the church will have will be transcendently better.

will be opened. Thus every eye will see that the kingdom is established; and every one will understand that he who suffered has entered into his glory, that the church, his bride, is with him in glory, and that the blessings of the Millennium proceed from them.—Revelation 20:6.

“DAYS OF THE SON OF MAN”

Turning from the silenced Pharisees to his disciples, Jesus said, “The days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and ye shall not see it.” This was astonishing news to the faithful. Yet they were accustomed to hearing from the Master things which they could not understand; such as that they must eat of his flesh and drink of his blood, that he must be crucified, etc. They took all these things figuratively and wondered what might be the real interpretation. How could Jesus be the great King, as they had expected, and yet they not see him and his days?

Jesus continued to discuss the enigma, saying, “They shall say to you, See here; or, See there: go not after them, nor follow.” In a word, do not believe anybody who will thus tell you about my second coming; do not be deceived into believing that I will come in any such manner. I will tell you how I shall come: “As the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, and shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of Man be in his day.”

This astounding statement is better understood when we translate the Greek noun *astrape* as “shining” instead of “lightning”; for evidently it refers to the sun, which rises in the east and sets in the west, shining out of the one part of the heaven even unto the other. But how will this represent the Son of Man in his day? How will he be like the sun? We answer that the day of Christ is a thousand-year day, the Millennium; and our Lord's statement was one of the “dark sayings” of which Jesus said, “I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now,” and promised that in due time the holy Spirit would grant them an enlightenment, that all of his words might be clearly understood. This portion, now due to be understood, is therefore becoming clear to those of spiritual discernment.

Then, that they might gradually learn that these things belonged to a distant time, Jesus explained that first he must suffer many things and be rejected of that nation. Coming back to an explanation of what would be the signs of his presence, in answer to their question as recorded in Matthew 24, He declared, “As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man.”

Here we have something definite, concrete. We know what to look for at the time when the kingdom will be due for establishment—the time when the Sun of Righteousness will begin to shine forth from one end of heaven to the other. The signs of the time will not be in the outward condition of the world; for on the contrary everything will be going along in as quiet and orderly a manner as ever, just as in the days of Noah, just as before the Deluge came, and just as in the days of Lot, before the destruction of Sodom—they ate, drank, married, built, bought, sowed, planted, as usual. These things are not signs of wickedness, but are mentioned to show us that there will be no outward sign to indicate to the world the time of the second presence of Christ, when he will begin to deal with the world and to set up his kingdom.

THE DELUGE AND SODOM'S DESTRUCTION

Why introduce these two pictures—the Deluge and the destruction of Sodom—in conjunction, while talking of the establishment of Messiah's kingdom, which is to bless the world? The answer is that the Bible everywhere foretells that although Messiah's kingdom is the great provision of God which will lift the curse and bring in blessings world-wide, nevertheless it is to be established upon the wreck of our present institutions. And it in this wreck of social, financial, political and religious institutions of the present time that Jesus illustrated by the Deluge and the destruction of Sodom. And his own presence pre-

ceding this time of trouble is to be unseen to the world, unknown to the world, unsuspected, unbelieving, until the cataclysm of trouble precipitates with suddenness.

This is not a charming picture. We are glad that we may turn from it, and note the silver lining of the cloud, and the glorious blessings which will speedily follow the establishment of the kingdom on the ruins of our human failures.

Emphasizing the suddenness with which the calamity will overtake the world, Jesus said that on the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained down fire and brimstone from heaven; and he declared that thus it will be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. The Greek text shows a difference between the *parousia*, or presence, of Christ before the time of trouble, and the later *epiphania*, or revealing.

The description of the revealing of Christ is given in the words, He shall be revealed in flaming fire. (2 Thessalonians 1:7, 8) Indeed, that time of trouble is frequently described symbolically in the Bible as a burning of the world—so much so, that all the creeds of Christendom express the thought that the earth is to be “burned.” They overlook the fact that the heavens are to be “burned” also.

In the symbolical usage of the Bible, the earth represents the social order of human affairs; the sea, the restless, discontented masses; the heavens, the ecclesiastical powers. St. Peter tells us that all these will pass away with a great confusion, and that instead will come the new heavens and the new earth which God has promised. (2 Peter 3:10-13) The new heavens will be the new ecclesiastical society—the church in glory, joint-heirs with Christ in his kingdom. The new earth will be the new social order which Messiah’s kingdom will establish.

SAINTS ON THE HOUSETOP

Again recurring to the period in which he will be present before being revealed “in flaming fire,” the Lord seems to assure us that all of his faithful ones will die, and be changed in the moment of dying, before the great trouble, the symbolic fire, will consume present institutions. In figurative language he says that in that day (of his *parousia*, presence, before his

epiphania, revealing) those on the housetop, with their goods in the house, should not leave to take them out. What is here meant?

Briefly, we believe that the house represents the house of God, and those on the housetop represent the most saintly of the people of God. At that time such will come to realize the necessity for flight; and the question will arise, How much of their stuff, their valuables, will they seek to save? They are warned not to seek to save any of the stuff—considerations of social privileges, honor of men, sometimes titles of small offices; such as vestryman, deacon, elder, minister, etc. An attempt to save any of these things will mean disappointment. Everything must be forsaken, else the test of that time will not be successfully passed.

Likewise, any in the field must not turn back. The field represents the world. And any of the Lord’s people who have gone out into the world—who have left the church nominal—are not to go back; but learning the truth of the situation they are to flee to the Lord from the field.

St. Matthew’s account speaks of special troubles at that time upon such as are with child and give suck, which we believe is also symbolical, and refers to Christian people, seeking to convert the world and to teach beginners. These will be in special travail of soul, because of the change of dispensation and the call, “Come out of her, my people.” It will be especially difficult for such to hear and to obey that call.

In the flight from Sodom, Lot and his family were warned to make haste, and not even to look back to the things that were to be destroyed. So the Lord’s people are not to look back at the things to be destroyed. Give them no thought. “Flee out of Babylon!” “Deliver every man his own soul!” Lot’s wife, disobeying, looked back longingly to the things of destruction, and failed to escape. The Lord applies this illustration to his people, and urges that their flight be with a full renunciation of the things of the present time. Whoever shall seek to save his life must lose it. Whoever will lose his life will thereby be preserving it—gaining the everlasting life.

CREATION PHOTO-DRAMA

THE WATCH TOWER readers everywhere are enthused by the Photo-Drama of Creation. In response to our recent suggestion, we are flooded with applications from various classes, giving the names of those appointed for the Drama Committee. We have answered many of these communications directly, but think it well to now give a general response and explanation.

We started with the thought that the Association should put the Drama on in different cities and trust to voluntary support; but by the time we had gotten out twelve sets of the Drama, the expense was enormous—our express bills alone on printed matter, machines, etc., running up to \$2,000.00 in one month, besides post and freight charges. Then came the realization that each one of those twelve sets could be serving four cities at one time. This meant four times the cost. We perceived that unless the Lord worked a miracle we would run out of funds, without accomplishing anything like the work we see before us to do. At the same time propositions began to come in from various cities and towns, assuring us that the I. B. S. A. classes of these places would be glad to finance the Drama locally, if they were provided with operators, free literature, Pax Pins, etc.

We take this to be the leading of the Lord’s providence—an intimation that the Lord desires to give his people everywhere an opportunity to participate in the Drama’s great testimony in their own cities. We are following this plan now, and invite those classes of Bible students who desire to have the Drama to canvass the subject amongst themselves and then, through their committee, to correspond at once with our office, advising us what they desire to do and are able to do in the way of meeting the expenses of presenting the Drama in their home cities.

Such information should be sent to the Society’s address, marked “Drama Department.” Americans and Canadians should address Brooklyn, New York, Office; British classes should address the London Office; Swedish classes should address the Orebro Office; Danish classes, the Copenhagen Office; German classes, the Barmen Office; French and Swiss classes, the Geneva Office. Act at once; and then, having done your part, wait patiently, assured that we will do all in our power to co-operate with you.

On the same postal it will be well to state how many Sisters of medium age and of good address and good appearance would volunteer to serve as ushers, and whether or not one or two of them would learn to operate the phonograph under the instructor whom the Society would send. Advise also if there is a

Brother in the class of good address suitable to serve the Drama presentation as floor manager and who could, without injury to his interests, give the necessary time.

We usually operate the Drama one week to each Part, afternoon and evening—four weeks to the Four Parts. However, where very large Auditoriums are used or where the city is small, we sometimes run the Four Parts in two weeks, beginning one Part with Sunday afternoon, another Part with Wednesday afternoon.

Theatres are better places for the Drama than churches, because Catholics do not care to go to Protestant churches, nor Protestants to Catholic churches, nor Jews to either—and all classes are interested in the Drama and it is for all. The dull season of the theatres has begun. Many of them are operating now at no profit; and, if run further, it would be at a loss. Under such circumstances, whatever amount is paid to the theatre people above the cost of light and janitorage is profit. Besides, many theatres are interested in bringing their name and location prominently before the public and would be benefited greatly by having the Drama.

Under such circumstances the theatre owners often give us astonishingly low prices—five, ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five dollars per day, according to size and quality of the theatre and the size of the city. In no case should we use an inferior Auditorium, nor one in a poor location even if it were offered free. Have these things in mind when writing to us. If you will, give us information respecting the best theatres, their seating capacity, the price at which they would be obtainable, etc.

In any event, be sure to inform us very definitely just what amount of assistance your class would need for the local presentation of the Drama. We must know this in every case hereafter, in order to know how to use the Drama most widely and how to use the Lord’s money in connection with it most wisely. Give this immediate attention, if interested; for whatever is to be accomplished this Summer should be under way now, or projected.

Toward fall there will be numerous Fairs and Expositions everywhere. The Fair and Exposition and Chautauqua Managers are interested in the Drama, as they would be in anything else that would help to attract to their enterprises. They frequently spend large sums for attractions. We have circulars to the effect that our Society is willing to supply the Photo-Drama of Creation free to those who proffer suitable Auditorium and other conveniences. We make no objection to the