



ROCK OF AGES
Other foundation can
no man lay —
A RANSOM FOR ALL

"Watchman, What of the Night?
The Morning Cometh, and a Night also!" Isa. 21:11-12

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"I will stand upon my watch, and will set my foot
upon the Tower, and will watch to see what He will
say unto me, and what answer I shall make to them
that oppose me."—Habakkuk 2: 1.

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Upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity, the sea and the waves (the restless, discontented) roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming upon the earth (society), for the powers of the heavens (ecclesiasticism) shall be shaken. When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then know that the Kingdom of God is at hand. Look up, lift up your heads, rejoice, for your redemption draweth nigh.—Matthew 24:33, Mark 13:29, Luke 21:26-31

THIS JOURNAL AND ITS SACRED MISSION

THIS journal is one of the prime factors or instruments in the system of Bible instruction, or "Seminary Extension", now being presented in all parts of the civilized world by the WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY, chartered A.D. 1884, "For the Promotion of Christian Knowledge". It not only serves as a class room where Bible students may meet in the study of the divine Word but also as a channel of communication through which they may be reached with announcements of the Society's conventions and of the coming of its traveling representatives, styled "Pilgrims", and refreshed with reports of its conventions.

Our "Berean Lessons" are topical rehearsals or reviews of our Society's published STUDIES, most entertainingly arranged, and very helpful to all who would merit the only honorary degree which the Society accords, viz., *Verbi Dei Minister* (V. D. M.), which translated into English is *Minister of God's Word*. Our treatment of the International Sunday School Lessons is specially for the older Bible students and teachers. By some this feature is considered indispensable.

This journal stands firmly for the defense of the only true foundation of the Christian's hope now being so generally repudiated—redemption through the precious blood of "the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom [a corresponding price, a substitute] for all". (1 Peter 1:19; 1 Timothy 2:6) Building up on this sure foundation the gold, silver and precious stones (1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Peter 1:5-11) of the Word of God, its farther mission is to "make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery which . . . has been hid in God, . . . to the intent that now might be made known by the church the manifold wisdom of God"—"which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed".—Ephesians 3:5-9, 10.

It stands free from all parties, sects and creeds of men, while it seeks more and more to bring its every utterance into fullest subjection to the will of God in Christ, as expressed in the holy Scriptures. It is thus free to declare boldly whatsoever the Lord hath spoken—according to the divine wisdom granted unto us to understand his utterances. Its attitude is not dogmatic, but confident; for we know whereof we affirm, treading with implicit faith upon the sure promises of God. It is held as a trust, to be used only in his service; hence our decisions relative to what may and what may not appear in its columns must be according to our judgment of his good pleasure, the teaching of his Word, for the upbuilding of his people in grace and knowledge. And we not only invite but urge our readers to prove all its utterances by the infallible Word to which reference is constantly made to facilitate such testing.

TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH

That the church is "the temple of the living God", peculiarly "his workmanship"; that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the Chief Corner Stone of his temple, through which, when finished, God's blessing shall come "to all people", and they find access to him.—1 Corinthians 3:16, 17; Ephesians 2:20-22; Genesis 28:14; Galatians 3:29.

That meantime the chiseling, shaping, and polishing of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin, progresses; and when the last of these "living stones", "elect and precious," shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the first resurrection; and the temple shall be filled with his glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.—Revelation 15:8.

That the basis of hope, for the church and the world, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world", "in due time".—Hebrews 2:9; John 1:9; 1 Timothy 2:5, 6.

That the hope of the church is that she may be like her Lord, "see him as he is," be "partakers of the divine nature", and share his glory as his joint-heir.—1 John 3:2; John 17:24; Romans 8:17; 2 Peter 1:4.

That the present mission of the church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be kings and priests in the next age.—Ephesians 4:12; Matthew 24:14; Revelation 1:6; 20:6.

That the hope for the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's Millennial kingdom, the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church when all the wilfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isaiah 35.

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The WATCH TOWER

AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE

VOL. XLI

JANUARY 1, 1920

No. 1

STRENGTHENED FOR VICTORY

"The Lord is my strength and song."—Psalm 118: 14.

[YEAR TEXT FOR 1920]

WATCHERS in Zion who by the eye of faith behold the day star rising and the great King of kings majestically advancing in the inauguration of his glorious kingdom occupy a peculiarly unique position. On every side they see great excitement and disturbance, yet they must be sober of mind and trustful of heart. Everywhere they see the spirit of war and strife, yet they must be at peace with all; and while specifically told to "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord," at the same time they are urged to "war a good warfare" (1 Timothy 1: 18) and to "fight the good fight". (1 Timothy 6: 12) All this is a conundrum to the men of the world. They do not understand; and, in the language of St. Paul, such things are foolishness unto them, neither can they know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Corinthians 2: 14) Only the spiritually minded can understand and appreciate the situation and such are they who are watching in Zion and who see eye to eye.

Following the long established custom of having a special text of Scripture designated for the year, we have chosen the text for 1920 as above: "The Lord is my strength and song". A deep appreciation of this text and a confident reliance upon it we believe will be of great blessing to the Lord's little ones. Hence these observations here. The more we appreciate the severity of the battle in which we are engaged, the more precious will be this year text to each one of the Lord's saints.

THE CHRISTIAN'S FIGHT

The words of this text were not written for the world; neither were the texts with reference to warring a good warfare and fighting a good fight. They were all addressed to the army of the King's own—the consecrated church, as prospective members of the bride of Christ. "The Lord knoweth them that are his" and to them he gives instructions concerning the warfare. They are to fight under the leadership of Christ Jesus, the Captain of their salvation. These soldiers of the cross are fighting under an unseen leader and against an unseen foe and only by the eye of faith do they recognize him who is their leader, who will be the one to lead them to victory. No matter how good one may be from the natural standpoint, how much he may love righteousness and strive to do right, he cannot enter the army of the Lord and fight under his banner until first he makes a full consecration of himself, is justified and accepted and begotten to the divine nature and thereby inducted into the army of the great King. It is of vital importance that we know under whom we fight, for whom we

fight, against what we fight and how we may be certain of victory.

For whom do we fight? Many have made the mistake of believing that they are fighting for God and for Christ and that Jehovah and the Lord Jesus really need them to fight. But not so. The Almighty God does not need any one to fight for him. He is abundantly able to do such fighting as he needs done. Neither does the Lord Jesus need to have any one to fight on his behalf, because all power in heaven and earth is committed into his hands. On the contrary, it is God and Jesus who are fighting for us. It is the Captain of our salvation, the Lord Jesus, who is leading our fight and who assists and encourages us to fight the good fight of faith. Our fight is for ourselves as new creatures against the enemies of the new creation. Our fight is for our liberty and complete deliverance from everything that would hinder a full realization of God's loving kindness and would give us perfect action in his service in all the ages to come.

WHOM DO WE FIGHT?

Against whom do we fight? Do we fight against our political foes? We answer no, because our citizenship is in heaven and the office-seekers of earth are not seeking the places we so much desire; hence there is no conflict between us on that line. Should not then our fight include a warfare in behalf of prohibition of the liquor traffic and things of that nature? While we should be in sympathy with anything that is good and with any one who is fighting evil, yet to engage in the political combat against the liquor traffic is not the fight to which the Apostle refers when he urges us to fight the good fight of faith and war a good warfare; nor is this the fight in which we need the strength of the Lord. Besides this, Satan, our adversary, is the chief of all politicians and he always seizes upon something apparently good and with it attempts to draw Christians into his fight and away from the true fight for which they are called into the Lord's army. The Babylonish systems have been making a fight against the liquor traffic and in favor of prohibition and we know that all Christians especially now are admonished to keep themselves separate from Babylon, not to be engaged in anything in which Satan himself is engaged through his emissaries. Our battle is along a different line and for a different purpose. We have a special goal to attain unto and this we must keep always before our minds.

Nor are we fighting against our fellow creatures, because we are admonished to love our enemies and pray for those who spitefully use us. Indeed, we can

exercise a great pity love for our enemies, seeing that they are blinded by the God of this world and are prejudiced against those who are striving to follow in the Master's footsteps. Were we to fight against them we might do them injury. The Scriptures admonish us to do good unto all as we have opportunity and in meekness to instruct those who oppose themselves. (2 Timothy 2:25) Instead of returning evil for evil, our captain has commanded us to return gentleness for rudeness, kindness for unkindness and discourtesy; and in this way all can understand that there is a difference between the world and those who have the spirit of the Master. More particularly is it necessary for us to take this course of training that we might be developed into the likeness of our Lord and Redeemer.

THE BATTLE AGAINST SIN

Primarily we are fighting against sin, to which our father Adam became the slave and thereby enslaved all of his offspring. Sin has afflicted the race with sickness, pain, sorrow and death, under which the whole creation continues to groan. Our chief enemy is sin and the one who put it into active operation is Satan, through whose subtle, wicked influence the human race became slaves to sin, and for this reason the Apostle says: "The whole world lieth in wickedness," i. e., under the control of the wicked one. (1 John 5:19) Having the world under his control, from which none can escape except through Christ, the great adversary vigorously endeavors to bring the new creation back under his dominion of sin and hold them there until destroyed. While Satan is our arch enemy and leading the fight against us, yet we must not make the mistake of thinking that we are fighting directly against him, but rather, we should understand that his operations are through various agencies and through these he seeks to beguile, deceive and entrap. He is the master of sin and wickedness, the very personification of evil. In our warfare against his agencies we are not to make the mistake of becoming bitter and vindictive and indulging in vile expressions of passion against him; for, as it is written, even "Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, . . . durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee".—Jude 9.

The agencies used chiefly by Satan to war against the new creation are the world, the flesh and the demons, Satan himself, of course, being the dominating one amongst the devils. He arrays all of these against the footstep followers of Jesus and by subtle and wily methods seeks to destroy them.

The new creature consists of the new will, the new mind and the new heart, through the exercise of which the character is being developed like unto the Lord. At the time of consecration the Christian surrenders his will and immediately takes God's will, desiring to be governed by the perfect will of God. Such change of will is an instantaneous matter, whereas the development of the mind, condition of heart, character, etc., is progressive.

THE WILL, THE MIND, THE HEART

Will may be defined as the faculty or power of the being by which we determine or decide to do or not to do a certain thing. Mind is the faculty or power of our

being by which we conceive thoughts, reason and judge, through which a conclusion or determination is reached. The heart means the seat of affections or sensibilities of the creature, from which springs the motive directing actions, good or evil. In proof of these distinctions we cite the Apostle Paul's words, addressed to the new creature: "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God". (Romans 12:2) The transforming process is a gradual one and comes by developing the mind by study and meditation upon God's Word, by and through which we ascertain what is the will of God; and having agreed to do his will, we reach conclusions based upon the information thus obtained.

Concerning the heart Jehovah says: "My son, give me thine heart," addressing himself to the one who now, being consecrated, has been begotten. (Proverbs 23:26) The Apostle Paul, having the same thought in mind and addressing himself to the new creature, says; "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth". (Colossians 3:2) It was Jesus who said: "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also". (Matthew 6:21) This being true, our motives will spring from such heart condition, which will direct our actions accordingly. But since no creature can exist without an organism, the Lord has provided that the body of fallen flesh shall constitute the temporary organism of the new creature; hence the Apostle says: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels". (2 Corinthians 4:7) Our standing before Jehovah is by virtue of the merit of Christ Jesus, whose righteousness covers our unrighteousness, and we are therefore made acceptable in the beloved One and recognized as new creatures—composed of the new will, the new mind, the new heart, with an organism covered by the robe of Christ's righteousness.

When the Scriptures speak of the world as one of our enemies, they mean all mankind who are out of harmony with God, and the spirit or disposition that controls such. Therefore, all who are controlled by the spirit of the world are of the world, and this is enmity to the new creation. The world has aims, ambitions, and hopes which are selfish, without regard to the rights and privileges of fellow creatures. At times the world is moved by the spirit of war and urges all to engage in mortal combat. The very atmosphere seems to be surcharged with a spirit of war and with this the new creature must come in contact; for, says the Apostle: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man" (1 Corinthians 10:13); "knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world". (1 Peter 5:9) There is, then, a temptation under pressure and stress for the new creature to engage in mortal combat under certain circumstances, but following the plain admonition and instruction of the Scriptures, he must resist this spirit or disposition. "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." (2 Corinthians 10:3, 4) However much the Christian may be misunderstood and

persecuted by the world for not walking with it in this way, he must be obedient to the Lord, bearing the reproaches that are incident to battling for his righteous cause.

STRUGGLE AGAINST SELF- AND MEN-PLEASING

Again, the spirit of the world is that of insincerity and deceitfulness, often appearing to be friendly while really unfriendly; manifesting a sincerity, yet with a desire to deceive. Against such a disposition the new creature must war, because he must be sincere, faithful and loyal. In the world there is a disposition to be men pleasers for policy's sake rather than to please God for righteousness' sake. Against such a disposition the new creation must war. This does not mean that we are to tell everything that we know, merely because it is the truth, on the theory that if we do not tell it would be deceiving, but to see to it that what we *do tell* is the truth, exercising the spirit of a sound mind and the wisdom that comes from on high to conserve the best interests of the new creature. While it is true that honesty is the best policy, yet he who is honest merely for policy's sake is not honest in fact. Again, the spirit of the world is that of ambition for fame among men, for special distinction and power and for self-exaltation over others. Such a spirit is decidedly inimical to the interests of the new creature, who must follow the contrary course and in honor prefer his brethren and by love serve others. The spirit of the world must be fought against, and this fight is a daily one so long as we are in the world.

The new creature finds a constant conflict with his organism of flesh. Ever since the human race came under the control of sin through the disobedience of Adam, the tendency has been toward mental, moral, and physical degradation. "Born in sin and shapen in iniquity," like all others we were going the broad way when we learned that Christ Jesus had redeemed us with his own precious blood. When we came to a knowledge of this fact and consecrated our all, giving up the old will for the will of God and determining to be governed by his will, then our Lord's merit was imputed to us and we were set free from the bondage of sin and became new creatures in Christ, acceptable to the Father through the merit of the beloved Redeemer. But still we find motions of sin in our body and a natural tendency toward sin. While it is true that the new creatures are now free and as such serve the law of Christ and are through his merit acceptable in his army as soldiers of the cross to battle for righteousness and truth, yet these new creatures are harassed by the perverted tastes and inclinations of the flesh. St. Paul thus states the situation: "For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the spirit, ye are not under the law". (Galatians 5:17, 18) To paraphrase the Apostle's words: The old creature, or, more accurately, the flesh of the old creature, craves certain things, which things are opposed and antagonistic to the development of the new creature and because of this conflict the new creature cannot do everything exactly as he would like to do. But if led

by the spirit, going in the direction the Lord would have us go, there is no law against so doing. And so the Apostle admonishes: "Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh".—Verse 16.

CARELESSNESS, BITTERNESS, IRREVERENCE

Any carelessness in thought, word, or action means to that extent a yielding to the mind of the flesh and means that the flesh is gaining the victory. If there is a tendency toward evil surmising or evil speaking of another, that is yielding in the battle to the mind of the flesh. (Titus 3:2; James 4:11, 12) It is not infrequent that troubles arise among the brethren in the classes and this leads to indulging in acrimonious speech one toward another. All who indulge in bitter strife, outbursts of passion, hatred or the fomenting of trouble, or who yield to looseness of conduct, are yielding the battle to the enemy. All who permit pride and ambition to find a residence in the heart and mind and permit their actions to be controlled thereby are to that extent yielding in the fight against the fleshly tendencies. To the extent that we show a lack of reverence for God, and for his Word and for his service, to that extent are we yielding the battle to the enemy. To the extent that we permit any bitterness of heart to control our actions and move us to do certain things, to that extent are we permitting the enemy to have the upper hand. Indeed, we find one of the greatest fights we have is that against our own flesh, the mind of the flesh always warring against the mind of the spirit. Who of the Lord's dear children have not experienced something of such a battle with the mind of the flesh, and do we not find that battle to be waged with even greater vigor as we come nearer to the end of the way? It must be reasonably expected that the fight will grow more severe as the battle nears a conclusion. After having been a long time in the narrow way, and after warring a good warfare against the evil tendencies, by faith in the Lord and his precious promises, we still find the motions of sin in our flesh warring against us as new creatures, we often tend to be discouraged to the point of giving over of the battle. But thanks be to God, he does not count those motions of sin in our flesh as the will of the new creature, provided we are vigorously fighting against them. He recognizes such as our enemies and if we fight valiantly, he will render the necessary aid, guaranteeing our victory.

In one of his epistles St. Paul describes his own experiences in these matters as follows, and his words may be properly understood to foreshadow the experiences of almost all in the narrow way: "While the will to do right is present with me, the power to carry it out is not. For what I do is not the good thing that I desire to do; but the evil thing that I desire not to do, is what I constantly do. But if I do that which I desire not to do, it can no longer be said that it is I who do it, but the sin which has its home within me does it. I find therefore the law of my nature to be that when I desire to do what is right, evil is lying in ambush for me. For in my inmost self all my sympathy is with the law of God; but I discover within me a different law at war with the law of my understanding, and leading me captive to the law which is everywhere at work in my

body—the law of sin. Unhappy man that I am! who will rescue me from this death-burdened body? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!”—Romans 7: 19-25, *Weymouth*.

In other words, the Apostle refers to himself as a new creature warring against his old fleshly tendencies and says that in his own self he would be unable to gain the victory, but through Christ Jesus, from whom comes his help and strength, he is assured of triumph. Such is truly the condition of all who are warring a good warfare. Thus we realize the absolute need for the help of our Lord and Advocate in this great conflict. The more fully we lean upon him and look to him for guidance and help, the happier will we be.

SATAN AND HIS MINIONS

Working in conjunction with Satan, seeking to destroy the seed of promise, the new creation, is a host of demons. Since they came under the dominating influence of Satan their every thought and action has been evil. They debauched the human race before the flood and have ever since sought to debauch those who are striving for the higher plane of life. They operate through the mind of the flesh and their warfare is against the new creature. The Apostle Paul puts it thus: “For ours is not a conflict with mere flesh and blood, but with the despotisms, the empires, the forces that control and govern this dark world—the spiritual hosts of evil arrayed against us in the heavenly warfare.” (Ephesians 6: 12, *Weymouth*) Satan, the great master or general of sin, and all the demons engaged in their manipulations and warfare through various agencies against us are more intelligent than are we, and if the conflict were between us and them directly, without the aid and intervention of our Captain, we would certainly fail. These enemies attack us through the weaknesses of our flesh and seek to capture us and lead us back as slaves of sin. Truly, then, the new creature, while abiding in the body of flesh, is surrounded and beset on every hand by enemies seeking its destruction and reënslavement. Hence we must battle, warring for ourselves, battling for our own liberty and for victory over our own weaknesses. We must battle against the spirit of the world, against the delusions and snares of the adversary, and against the wicked machinations and influences of the demons. In this conflict the Christian daily realizes the need of strength to withstand the onslaught of the enemies. He turns his eyes trustingly and confidently to the Captain, Christ Jesus our Lord, from whom cometh his strength, and he can confidently say: Greater is he that is on our part than all that can be against us.

ABSTEMIOUSNESS REQUISITE TO VICTORY

But we must remember that the Lord expects us to fight with all the power and strength at our command. Seeing it is through our fallen flesh that these adversaries attack us, we must be ever prepared for the battle and ever on the alert, watching and praying. St. Paul had this conflict and he describes himself thus: “Every competitor in an athletic contest practises abstemiousness in all directions. They indeed do this for the sake of securing a perishable wreath, but we for the sake of securing one that will not perish. That is

how I run, not being in any doubt as to my goal. I am a boxer who does not inflict blows on the air, but I hit hard and straight at my own body and lead it off into slavery, lest possibly, after I have been a herald to others, I should myself be rejected.”—1 Corinthians 9: 25-27, *Weymouth*.

Since we see that we must engage in this conflict unto the end, then it is our privilege and duty to avail ourselves of such armor and weapons as the Lord has provided. Through his Word we ascertain that he has a great armory and to this he has invited us to come and prepare ourselves for the conflict, saying, “Strengthen yourselves in the Lord and in the power which his supreme might imparts. Put on the complete armor of God, so as to be able to stand firm against all the stratagems of the devil.” (Ephesians 6: 10, 11, *Weymouth*) Thankful we should be and are that the Lord has graciously provided this armor that we might wear it in the conflict. “Therefore put on the complete armor of God, so that you may be able to stand your ground on the day of battle, and, having fought to the end, to remain victors on the field.” (Ephesians 6: 13, *Weymouth*) Then the Apostle specifically describes the armor, which it is the privilege of each one of the Lord’s own to have and to wear. We do well to examine ourselves often to see if the armor is well on, properly adjusted and ready for the deadly conflict.

The ancient armor was divided into seven separate and distinct parts. Here the Apostle names six and we believe that the Lord through his servant called the attention of the church to the seventh. The Apostle first says: “Having your loins girt about with truth”. The girdle around the loins is indicative of a servant. The meaning therefore attached to this is that each one should see to it that he is serving the truth, not serving the world, not serving error, not serving the adversary. This would mean for him to be active and vigilant, not slothful.

He is next admonished to take “the breastplate of righteousness”. The breastplate fitted over the vital organs, particularly the heart. The thought, then, here seems to be that he must see to it that he has a righteous condition of heart, having his heart united together with his brethren, dwelling in peace with all and following holiness.

PREPAREDNESS WHICH PEACE GIVES

“And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.” The feet that tread the rough way will be bruised and become sore; and if one is not properly shod he will be giving more attention to the things that are bothering him than he is to the cause. Therefore he should have on the sandals of preparation of the gospel and development of character in harmony with God’s will, to the end that he might endure hardness in a cheerful manner. And when the persecutions from the world come upon him, he can walk joyfully through them.

“Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.” We might know the Word of God, but unless we confidently rely upon it, it would be of little value to us. The Psalmist says “His truth shall be thy shield and

buckler". Then it is a knowledge of the precious promises, of God and a confident reliance upon these promises, looking always to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, that will hold us in line and enable us to cause the fiery darts of the adversary to fall harmless at our feet.

"And take the helmet of salvation." Since the helmet fitted over the head, which is the seat of intelligence, it suggests the thought of a mental equipment—that we have been studying the Lord's Word, that we have been feeding upon the food the Lord has placed upon his table; and here we might remark that all who have faithfully read and absorbed the *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES* and been guided thereby have been equipped to stand in this conflict, and this means the entire series of seven volumes of *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*. Just as surely as the Lord intended the seven to be published, he intended them for the benefit of the church and he who rejects one and opposes it will find himself in opposition to the provision the Lord has made and therefore without the proper equipment, as regards intelligence to meet the adversaries. And his condition of inadequate preparedness of mind would lay him more open to the successful attacks of the adversaries. If his heart has been the cause of his rejecting the Lord's provision, the enemy would surely triumph.

"And the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God." Being able always to give a Scriptural reason for the hope that is in us and being anxious and willing to abide by what the Lord teaches and not to be influenced improperly by any creature, we are able to avoid being controlled by other influences than the Word of God; for to be so controlled is to be dominated by passion, which is inimical to the interests of the new creature, while if governed by the Word of God we are controlled by principle, in harmony with his purposes.

The seventh part of the armor seems to be fitly represented in the Vow. The Lord promised that when the adversary should come in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord would raise up a standard against him. (Isaiah 59:19) Hence the necessity of keeping in mind the terms of our Vow unto the Lord, ever looking to him for strength to help in time of need. The Apostle suggests this same thought when he admonishes us that after having on the armor, we are to pray always, with all prayer and supplication in the spirit and watch thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

WAR WITH THE BEAST

All through the gospel age the Christian has been required to fight the good fight of faith, but it seems reserved for the feet members to have a special conflict against the combined enemies. The Lord through the Revelator pictures coming out of the abyss at the close of the gospel age a wild beast, which evidently means a governing power ruled by force and violence and which is another instrument of the adversary. This beast is composed of ecclesiasticism, particularly the dominating factors of the Papal, Anglican and other Protestant systems, working in conjunction with and through the civil authorities, aided and abetted by the financial powers and others who desire favor with those in control.

"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is the Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." (Revelation 17:14) The Lamb here means the Lord Jesus, and those with him, having reference to those of the new creation who are loyally following in his footsteps. These have been called to a high calling, to be joint-heirs with Christ Jesus. They have been chosen as members of the royal priesthood. Now the final conflict is come, and those who stand with him triumphant in glorious victory will be the ones who are faithful and loyal even unto death. This Scripture suggests that the beastly ones would inflict upon the followers of the Lamb much persecution in various forms and the more power the ecclesiastics are able to exercise the greater will be the persecution. Those standing with the Lord, then, in victory will be the ones who are loyal to him, which means loyalty to his cause, a willingness at all times by his grace to make persistent proclamation of his truth and to do it moved by a heart filled with love for God and righteousness and pity love even for our enemies who are persecuting.

But, beloved, as we advance in the conflict and the battle grows in severity, instead of being discouraged, we can always look to our Captain; and knowing that he is leading the fight and that he is all-powerful and certain of victory, it remains with us to determine what shall be the result so far as we are concerned. And if we are called and chosen and now continue faithful and loyal in the fight under his banner to the end, we shall emerge from the conflict victors in his glorious army.

Truly, then, as we engage in this battle during the year 1920 we can daily find comfort in our yearly motto text: "The Lord is my strength and song".

FIGHT NOT ENDED

Let not one for a moment think that because the forty-year period of the harvest is ended the fight of the church has ended. Far from that. Our fight is to the end of our racecourse. The Apostle sounds the keynote when he says: "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin," meaning that up to this time we have not fought the good fight even unto death, but that we must persistently war the good warfare for righteousness and truth until our course in the flesh is ended. The banner under which the King's own are fighting is one marked with the cross and crown. He that endures the cross shall wear the crown. And on the reverse side are the names of the King and Captain of this army—the Lamb of God that leads unto victory; and the law that governs this army is summed up in one word—Love. All who are enrolled under this banner must have active service and must continue in active service until the last. To become idle and negligent, or indifferent, would mean yielding the battle to the adversaries. The Apostle admonishes us that we must "be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." (1 Peter 5:8) Sobriety means calmness of mind and restfulness of heart. And vigilant means to be active and watchful in the Lord's service. It means, then, to be active in fighting against all the enemies of the new creation.

Our enlistment does not carry with it a discharge.

We may desert and have the liberty to do so, but such would mean the loss of all that is set before us. All who desire to go back to the service of sin have full opportunity at any time and in any place to return. Our Captain wants those and only those who serve the truth with the spirit of the truth, with a desire for the service and with a love for it. He is seeking none other and none other is really engaged in the fight. He informs us that the end of the fight will be the end of our warfare. It must be a fight to the finish or the great prize for which we fight will not be gained. Although the new creature masters the mortal body by the Lord's grace and strength repeatedly, nevertheless, until death there can be no cessation of the conflict. Hence, "be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life". Happy are we, then, when we can hourly look to him and say: "The Lord is my strength". And again: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber." (Psalm 121:1-3) "The Lord is my strength and my shield." (Psalm 28:7) "The Lord will give strength unto his people."—Psalm 29:11.

FIGHTING FOR OTHERS

The fight in which we are engaged is chiefly for ourselves. In this we are fighting to maintain our liberty from the baneful influence and bondage of sin and all the instruments used by the adversary to ensnare us under this taskmaster again. But in addition thereto we are fighting a common cause of righteousness for our brethren and we are admonished: "We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren". This would include our making great sacrifices that we might aid our brethren in overcoming the enemy that is fighting against them, that Christ might dwell richly in their hearts, that they might be builded up as new creatures, and that they might experience the love of God manifested through Christ. To be sure our heavenly Father and our King do not need our fighting in their behalf, but it is our privilege to defend the honor and name and majesty of our God and our Lord and his righteous kingdom against the assaults of those who wickedly misrepresent them; and our fighting here is not with carnal weapons, as the Apostle puts it, but it is with the message of truth, which through Christ is mighty to the pulling down of strongholds of error. Our persistency and faithfulness in representing the Lord will be necessary in order that we may have his approval.

Furthermore, our warfare will result, if we are faithful, in great benefit to the world in general, even to those who persecute us and do all manner of evil against us because of our faithfulness to the truth. We must have in mind that the whole world is under the bondage of sin; furthermore, that the precious blood of Christ was given as a propitiation not for our sins only but for the sins of the whole world; and when the valiant soldiers of the cross have finished their warfare and are received into glory, it will be their privilege, together with their Captain, Christ Jesus, to release from bondage the whole world of mankind. Jehovah's purpose concerning the overcomers who will compose

the royal priesthood is indicated in his Word: "Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve [Hebrew, *form*] thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves". (Isaiah 49:8, 9) The Lord has therefore provided that those who gain the victory through Christ will be used as benefactors for the whole human race.

GRACE FOR EVERY NEED

Our Lord has promised grace for help in every time of need, and through the Apostle has invited us, because of this high priest who has gone before in our behalf, to come confidently to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help for all times of need. (Hebrews 4:15, 16) It has pleased our heavenly Father to provide various agencies through which to render aid to those who love him. Even in Old Testament times when one was specially striving to serve the Lord, Jehovah sent his angel, a spirit being, to minister unto such. We have an example in the experiences of Daniel and other faithful servants of God. The Lord Jesus informs us: "In heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 18:10), meaning that some of the angelic host have been delegated as servants under the Lord's direction to give certain protecting care to the saints. Again Jehovah expressed, for the benefit of the church, his protecting care through angels as agencies, saying, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him and delivereth them". (Psalm 34:7) We recall that when Elisha was at Dothan he prayed to God for the opening of the eyes of his servant, who beheld a host of angels surrounding Elisha to protect him. It is not unreasonable to conclude that this is a picture for the benefit of the church in the closing days of its conflict which the Lord has provided to manifest his power and strength in behalf of his people through unseen agencies. Necessarily the confidence of the Christian is increased when he appreciates the fact that the Lord is thus guarding his welfare. In the face of all his enemies, powerless he is to resist and overcome his adversaries alone, but claiming the promises that God has given, among which is our year text, he can confidently say, The Lord is my strength; and if he be for me, who can be against me!

STRENGTH AND PROTECTION FOR THE PERFECT

Strength and protection are not promised to any and all, but, on the contrary, such promises are to those who reverence the Lord, who fear to displease him, whose keen desire is to do his holy will, who possess and manifest, therefore, a perfect condition of heart toward God, toward the Master, toward his brethren, in fact toward all; for "the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him". (2 Chronicles 16:9) Purity of heart, which means perfect love, is a condition precedent to the receiving of the guaranteed strength in our behalf. We can keep our hearts perfect, even though we can do nothing else

perfectly. Graciously, therefore, the Lord has promised all the needed strength for those who thus maintain the perfect condition of heart. Such, then, should cause a careful searching of the heart. If we should find in the heart some bitterness against any of the Lord's little ones, we may know that the heart is not pure, and steps should be taken at once to purify it. If we should find that in our heart there is some pride or ambition, we may be sure that the Lord will not manifest his strength for us, because he resists the proud and shows his favor to the humble-minded. If we find a desire to pursue unrighteous things, we may be sure that our heart is not perfect and at once we should set about to follow the right course. If we find in our heart a fear for man or that which man-made institutions might do to us, and because of this fear we are deterred from a faithful proclamation of the divine message as opportunity comes to us, then we may be sure that we have not perfect love and therefore not a pure heart. But if on examination we find that this is our sincere, humble heart's desire, to do our Father's will at any cost and that we are delighting thus to do and striving to do it, we may be certain to receive the needed strength.

OUR SONG

Our year text states that the Lord is not only our strength, but also our song. In what sense is he our song? Song suggests the thought of giving praise in harmonious cadences, accompanied by the music of a stringed instrument over which the fingers of the player deftly move. In a special sense it seems that the feet members can say: "The Lord is my song". In Psalm 126 the sweet singer of Israel seems to picture the church at the time of the opening of the harvest period and also the experiences of each one of the Lord's chosen ones who thereafter comes to a knowledge of the divine plan. Up to the time of the opening of the harvest the church was in captivity to Babylon, and with the harvest of the Lord began releasing his people from that bondage; and since then each one of the saints, coming to a realization of the blessedness of living at the time of the second presence of the Lord Jesus, finds his sentiments expressed by the Psalmist. When first he saw the hope for the church and for the world opening out like the unfolding petals of a beautiful flower, in the language of the Psalmist it caused him to sing: "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream [it sounded too good to be true, it seemed like a dream]. Then was our mouth filled with laughter [joy], and our tongue with singing; then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them. [Aye, concerning the church] The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad."—Psalm 126: 1, 2.

St. Paul, a good and valiant soldier of the cross who fought a winning fight, with prophetic vision beheld the day in which we are now living, a day filled with turmoil and strife among the nations of the earth. He saw the whole race of mankind burdened from the effects of sin, and seeing this he wrote: "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now," waiting, not knowing for what, but in fact waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God, who will

be victors, overcomers in the great conflict and will then be used by the Lord as agencies for releasing mankind. Looking beyond this hour of sorrow and groaning he had a vision of the incoming kingdom with power and glory; for we are sure that he saw the coming Millennial reign of Christ. He said it was not lawful for him to tell the things that he saw, evidently because it was not God's due time for the other members of the church to know them then; but since the presence of the Lord Jesus the due time in God's providence has come and now the feet members see, understand and appreciate God's provision both for the church and for the world.

"YET A LITTLE WHILE"

Seeing the world borne down under the great taskmaster, slaves of the wicked one, and knowing the kingdom is at the door, the saints can appreciate the Apostle's words, "Yet a little while and he that shall come will come and will not tarry". It has been a long, dark night of suffering and sorrow for mankind and not yet does the world see that relief is near, but they are hoping against hope that something may come to relieve the situation. But the saints of God, occupying by his grace a position of favor, see beyond the dark cloud the soft, sweet, healing beams of the Sun of Righteousness, which soon will dispel the gloom and shed its beneficent rays upon suffering humanity. In this world of strife, confusion and turmoil they mark those who are near and dear to them by ties of flesh and whom they specially love and for whom they would have no hope except for their knowledge of God's plan; but now, knowing of his gracious provision, while they see the night is dark, yet they see that the day is dawning which soon will bring blessings not only to their loved ones but to all the groaning creation, and their hearts cannot help but respond with songs of gladness.

The lost strings upon the harp of God have since the Lord's second presence been found and restored to the church in the flesh and now that harp, perfectly strung, with the strings of truth from the Old and New Testaments, and swept by the fingers of the truly consecrated and devoted saints of God, yields the most enchanting music that ever fell on mortal ear. And those who hear and appreciate it cannot keep back the song. They call to mind the circumstances under which much of the Lord's Word has been provided for them. Looking back they see upon the isle of Patmos the beloved John, clad in a felon's garb, there as a prisoner, beating rock, because he had been charged and unjustly convicted of the crime of sedition. And they see that the Lord chose this condition and chose St. John because of his loving devotion to righteousness through which to reveal a part of his plan now due to be understood. In his vigil there, the beloved saint of God wrote: "And I saw, as it were, a sea of glass, mingled with fire". St. John there represented the feet members of the church, the last ones on earth engaged in the final great battle. His vision here suggests that the feet members would have a clear view and understanding of the terrible events with which the world would be afflicted in the close of the age, the fire picturing the violent element of earth attempting to destroy the things of earth. The transparent glass mentioned represents the fact that the feet

members will have a clear understanding and appreciation of these events.

"ABOVE EARTH'S LAMENTATIONS"

And these are they who have rid themselves, by the grace of the Lord, of the wicked influences of the mother harlot and her harlot daughters, fully separating themselves from the unrighteous Babylonish systems. These are pictured standing, not in the midst of the trouble, nor participating in it, not engaging in the strife and turmoil, but occupying a higher plane, and from this vantage point they have a clear vision of the situation. Standing in that position of favor, St. John pictures them as having in their hand the harps of the Lord God, meaning that they have a harmonious understanding and an appreciation of the precious promises and teachings of the divine program; and thus standing they indulge in happy song. And what song are they singing? St. John answers, They are singing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb. The battle rages with ever-increasing fury and the distress upon the nations is so terrible that all quake with fear. The groaning of oppressed humanity grows louder and louder; and yet above all of this strife of tongues, this turmoil, disturbance, groaning and sorrow, the sweet, clear notes of the saints of God can be heard, singing to the praise of Jehovah: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand". To the Jew and to the Gentile they sing that the things done by the direction of the law that God gave to Moses were but types and shadows of better things to come; that the sacrifices of animals pictured the great sacrifice of the Lord Jesus as an offering for sin on behalf of mankind, that the whole world might be released from the bondage of sin and death and that now shortly all will have an opportunity to receive the benefits thereof; that the shaking of the mountain at the inauguration of the Law Covenant and the great smoke, fire and disturbance, which even made Moses quake, was a picture, foreshadowing the great shaking of the kingdoms of earth and the ecclesiastical systems now in progress, and foreshadowing the fact that this will be the last shaking just preceding the incoming of the glorious kingdom of Messiah; that the New Covenant, through which blessings will come to the world, is soon to be made; that the Lamb of God, the King of glory, is at the door, bearing in his hand the prize of life, liberty, and happiness for all who will love righteousness and accept these blessings upon the terms offered.

WATCHERS LIFT THE VOICE

The saints of God engaged in this great conflict, this good warfare, realize and appreciate that both the strength which enables them to stand in the battle and the song of joy that fills their hearts comes from the Lord; and seeing his gracious provision both for the church and for the world, they cannot keep back the

song of praise. Beautifully has the poet expressed the sentiment of such:

"My life flows on in endless song;
Above earth's lamentation,
I catch the sweet, not far-off hymn
That hails a new creation.
Through all the tumult and the strife,
I hear the music ringing;
It finds an echo in my soul—
How can I keep from singing?"

"I lift mine eyes; the cloud grows thin;
I see the blue above it:
And day by day this pathway smooths,
Since first I learned to love it.
The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart,
A fountain ever springing;
All things are mine since I am his—
How can I keep from singing?"

In the unfolding of the divine plan in behalf of mankind, the whole world has formed a stage of action and upon that stage all who have faithfully served the Lord have served as actors, and earthly beings and the heavenly hosts have constituted the audience. St. Paul says: "We are made a show both for men and angels". Some of the Lord's faithful servants were permitted to have visions of this unfolding plan, yet they did not understand them. The angelic hosts have watched and for a long time searched to understand, but not until the beginning of the unfolding of the mystery were any permitted thus to know. The faithful prophet Isaiah, long before the development of the new creation began, had a vision of the time and of the events now transpiring in the earth. He saw the kingdoms and nations and people in distress and sorrow, needing help, needing the blessings of the King of glory. In vision he beheld—but understood not—the feet members of Christ proclaiming the message of salvation unto them, and with ecstasy he exclaimed: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Thy watchmen [those in the vantage position described by St. John] shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion."—Isaiah 52: 7, 8.

The blessedness of the position of favor occupied by the saints in this final great conflict that is now on cannot be overstated. Satan's empire is crumbling and soon will fall, never to rise again. Seemingly appreciating the fierceness of the conflict, that great adversary has marshaled all his forces and directs them with all the power at his command at the few remaining members of the saints of the most high God. Weak in themselves and wholly inadequate to meet their enemies, yet with confidence they can say: "The Lord is my strength and song". The Lord will give us the victory through an abiding faith and confidence in him.

Lord, help me to forget the things behind,
The many fond ambitions that would bind
The human heart to earthly hopes and joys,
And fix its cravings on mere worthless toys.

Help me forget, O Lord, how oft I stray,
The sad mistakes I make from day to day,
Yet let me ne'er forget the Mercy Seat,
Where thou dost bless me with forgiveness sweet.

Lord, give me grace sufficient for the way,
Oh, let me ne'er forget to watch and pray!
And when thy precious jewels thou shalt set,
This little one, dear Lord, do not forget!

PETER AND JOHN IN SAMARIA

— FEBRUARY 1.—ACTS 8:4-8, 14-25.—

PERSECUTION AND ITS UNFORESEEN, BUT HAPPY, RESULTS—PHILIP, THE HOME MISSIONARY, FILLED WITH ZEAL FOR THE GOSPEL—PETER AND JOHN VISIT THE NEW MISSION FIELD—SIMON, THE SORCERER, ASSOCIATES HIMSELF WITH THE DISCIPLES—HE OFFERS MONEY FOR THE MIRACULOUS POWER OF THE SPIRIT.

"Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."—Acts 1:8.

PERSECUTION is never right on the part of the persecutors, nor is it a joyous matter on the part of the persecuted; nevertheless God can overrule this, as well as all wrongs, for the good of his people, who can learn also the lessons of "rejoicing in tribulation", and of trusting divine providences through them—seeing by faith the desirable results.

The first persecution of the church began about the time of Stephen's death. This is variously estimated as having been from three to seven years after the Day of Pentecost, though we have no means of definite information. Saul of Tarsus, afterward called Paul the Apostle, was evidently a leader in the heresy hunting and persecution which started with Stephen and extended in a general way to all believers, excepting the apostles, who, for some reason, seemed to have been providentially protected.

The persecution began in Jerusalem, because this so far had been the center of the work, as our Lord had directed—"beginning at Jerusalem". Not only was it the principal city of Palestine, but it was the resort of pious Jews from all quarters of the world, many of whom sought to make it their home in the close of life, even if they had previously lived abroad. The Lord had graciously granted a season of development for those brought into the church at Pentecost and subsequently; and now that they had reached a fair degree of growth in grace and in knowledge he permitted the winds of persecution to blow against the church, and to scatter the ripened seeds hither and thither in every direction.

PERSECUTION'S TWO EFFECTS

The same God who directed thus in the affairs of the early church still loves and cherishes his own; still directs and guides in respect to the interests of his own cause, his Zion. Now, as then, it is with him to permit or to hinder persecution, according as in his wisdom would be for the best interests of his people and for the outworking of his glorious plans. The persecution which then arose had, doubtless, a two-fold effect: (1) It served to test and to sift those who had already named the name of Christ; to prove their loyalty, their willingness to endure hardness as good soldiers, their worthiness to be reckoned among the overcomers. Not only did it test them, but it undoubtedly strengthened them; for experience shows us that every trial and test endured with faithfulness brings an increase of victory and strength of character. (2) It became the Lord's means of spreading the truth in every direction, and thus of greatly broadening, as well as deepening his work in the world. Having first placed those who, by his providential arrangements, had been gathered to one center, he now scattered them, as lights throughout Palestine and the adjacent country.

There was a Philip among the twelve apostles, but it is not he that is referred to in this lesson. This Philip was one of the seven deacons whose choice by the church is related in Acts 6:5. Evidently he had used well the opportunities thus afforded him, by attending not only to the distribution of the natural food to the needy, but by the feeding of his own heart upon the spiritual food also, thus preparing himself, as a servant and minister of the Lord, for further service of a more spiritual kind.

Philip was one of those whom the persecution drove out of Jerusalem. Let us stop here to notice that the early church might have said: Persecution is getting severe; but we will stay where we are, suffer imprisonment, etc., esteeming that the Lord is able to protect us here as well as elsewhere. This would have been sound reasoning; but it would have indicated a neglect of the Lord's directions to his church, when he said: "When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another". (Matthew 10:23) The persecution was intended to scatter them, and failure to

take heed to the Lord's directions might have led some of the most earnest and faithful of the church to resist the designs of providence obstinately. So now, let those who may be called upon to endure persecution remember the Lord's direction; and after giving a proper testimony, if the door of opportunity opens, let them remove to another locality, where their faithfulness and increased knowledge and wisdom in the handling of "the sword of the spirit" may give them opportunities for still greater usefulness. This was the case with Philip, who removed to Samaria, and apparently lost no time in beginning the ministry of the truth, preaching Christ.

"MY WITNESSES IN SAMARIA"

It will be remembered that the city of Samaria was the capital of a district called Samaria, whose people were known as Samaritans; being of mixed blood, Jewish and Gentile, they were accounted by the Jews as though they were Gentiles; hence "the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans". We remember, further, that it was respecting these people that our Lord said to his disciples, when sending them forth: "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel". (Matthew 10:5, 6; 15:24) Our Lord thus marked the Samaritans as being separate and distinct from the Israelites.

We remember, further, that it was because our Lord would not enter into a village of Samaria and heal its sick, that the people of that city refused to sell the disciples food, as they passed by. It was in resenting this affront that James and John, two of the apostles, said to our Lord: "Wilt thou that we command fire from heaven to consume their city?" Jesus answered: "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them". (Luke 9:52-56) It was a woman from a little city in this same section who had previously met the Lord at Jacob's well, and who got from him a little taste of the water of Life, then brought many of her friends and neighbors, who also tasted and were refreshed, and many of them believed on him. Nevertheless, our Lord's testimony was: "Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews".—John 4:22.

The fact that Philip now came into Samaria, under the leading of divine providence, and preached the Gospel there, signifies that the time had come for the Gospel to be extended beyond Judaism. It implies, therefore, that this incident occurred at least three and one-half years after our Lord's death—after the close of the seventieth symbolic week, and the full end of Israel's special favor as respects the Gospel invitation of this age. Evidently the apostles had less strenuous feelings of opposition against the Samaritans than against Gentiles in general, because they were of mixed Jewish blood.

THE GOSPEL ACCOMPANIED BY SIGNS

The Samaritans were ripe for the Gospel, and the fact that the Jews had disdained them as they did the Gentiles no doubt made them all the more ready to receive the Gospel message, which ignored all caste and class distinctions, and accepted into its brotherhood all who confessed their sins, accepted Jesus as the Redeemer, and made full consecration to him. Philip's preaching was backed by the open manifestations of the spirit, in healings, etc., as was all the preaching of that time. These manifestations of power were intended to establish the faith, and to counteract the wonder workings of Satan through necromancers, those possessed of the spirit of divination, and others of like brand.

The truth reached the Samaritans just in time to rescue them from some of Satan's wily arts, as practised by one

Simon Magus—the word *Magus* signifying sorcerer. The record is that his influence with the people had been great, both with rich and poor. They looked upon him as being possessed of “the great power of God”. As the Apostle declares, the great deceiver assumes a garment of light, and presents himself as a minister of light, for the deception of those who are seeking the truth. Today he has a variety of devices, snares and traps for those who are waking out of the slumbers of gross superstition and ignorance brought down from the dark ages.

Just at the present time Satan is making great use of spiritism to delude the people and create the impression in their minds that table tipplings, weird rappings, more or less incoherent mutterings or whisperings, flashes of light, etc., etc., are in some manner manifestations of divine power. In another garb he appears as a healer, presenting to the suffering members of humanity certain physical reliefs and cures. These are accomplished by the same power which worked through Simon Magus and are distributed to those who will yield themselves to deception and who will deny the truth and persistently stick to the denial; they shall have the reward of healing.

SIMON MEETS SUPERIOR POWER

Those who accepted Philip's message, and made a consecration to the Lord, signified it by baptism, by immersion into water. This symbolized the immersion of their wills into the will of God as expressed in Christ. It signified that henceforth they would be dead to self and to the world, and would rise to walk in newness of life, as members of the body of Christ. We read nothing about the recording of the names in a denominational register. The early church recognized, as we do, that the important matter is that believers should be *joined to Christ* and that their names on this account should be “written in heaven”. Simon, who had previously been the religious leader of the people, their leader into darkness, into the wiles of the adversary, became one of Philip's converts, one of those immersed, and a constant attendant upon Philip's ministry, beholding with amazement the power of God operating through him, which power he recognized as being superior to the power of Satan which had operated through himself.

News of God's favor to the Samaritans, and of their acceptance of the Lord, soon reached Jerusalem; and representatives of the whole company of the apostles and others at that place went down to Samaria to observe the work of the Lord, and, no doubt, to encourage the believers. But they went specially because the *gifts* of the holy spirit (miraculous healings, tongues, etc.,) could be communicated only through the apostles. However well Philip might proclaim the Gospel and immerse believers he, not being one of the chosen twelve, had not the power of communicating those gifts. It is manifest that since those gifts were communicated only by the apostles they must have ceased shortly after the death of the last of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

Peter was one of those sent, and also John, the very one who had inquired of our Lord whether he desired them to call down fire upon the Samaritan village. How much change the gospel of Christ had wrought, even in this good young man! He had learned of Jesus and now had the same spirit which sought not to destroy men's lives but to save them.

When the apostles arrived they prayed with the disciples, and then laid their hands upon them, communicating some of the gifts. Presumably the gifts were the same here as elsewhere: power to speak with foreign tongues, to interpret foreign languages, to perform miracles, etc. As Simon Magus was one of the believers, one of the baptized ones, it is quite possible that he received some gift of the holy spirit. Yet he, and quite probably others of the number, was not in full harmony with the Lord and his gracious plans. The *gifts* of the spirit might be imparted instantaneously; but the fruits of the spirit could be had only by growth. Those gifts, therefore, are not to be esteemed as being such good evidence of the divine favor and of

nearness to the Lord as are the fruits of the spirit which all of the Lord's consecrated people of today should possess in some degree—meekness, gentleness, patience, long suffering, brotherly kindness, love. The Apostle Paul tells us that if he had all of the gifts and yet lacked love, it would profit him nothing, eventually, as respects the great favor to which the Lord has called his church.—1 Corinthians 13: 1-8.

SIMON'S HEART NOT RIGHT

Simon Magus, while astonished at what he had seen, and interested from that standpoint, and convinced that the power was a holy one; and while he had also cast in his lot with the believers, and probably received a gift, was still “in the gall of bitterness, and in the bonds of iniquity”, as the Apostle Peter subsequently told him. We might naturally incline to the thought that Simon never was a heart believer and that his acceptance of the gospel was with some unholy motive. But if this view be taken we are encountered with the statement that he “believed” and with the further fact that the Apostle admonished him to pray that the thought of his heart might be forgiven him. In the New Testament the word *believers* indicates, almost universally, fully consecrated believers. The Scriptures do not inform us more particularly and we are obliged to leave the account there. We do not know what became of Simon Magus, but we do know that his attempt to purchase special gifts from God with money was a reprehensible act and met with the rebuke it deserved from the Apostle Peter.

Apparently we are able to discern in Simon the conception of the Anti-Christ idea, the first manifestation of a desire on the part of believers to effect pecuniary aggrandizement through the power associated with the gospel. Simon's interest in the powers exemplified by the apostles led him to the point of asking Peter to give him the apostolic power of communicating gifts; promising him in return a good compensation in money. He thus showed that he was not deeply interested in the truth and its service from the right standpoint; that it was merely a curiosity interest and that selfishness had not given place to love: that he would like to have this apostolic power so that he could use it in a selfish way, for his own aggrandizement either in money or prestige—at all events for his own advantage among the people.

THE SIN OF SIMONY

There have been many of this same disposition since. Simony does not necessarily appeal to the worst of men, nor even to the less endowed among believers. It is safe to say that there are hundreds of thousands, yea, millions, of the Magus class in the nominal churches of today; there are men and women who have never discerned the real spirit and purpose of the gospel, but who look at its various arrangements from the mercenary point of view, considering what shall be the gain or loss, the social advantage or disadvantage of their relationship thereto. They maintain their relationship to Christendom because of the honor or social position or worldly prosperity which it has brought them, or is bringing them, or which they hope yet to obtain through it. To all such the words of the Apostle apply: “Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter”. The holy spirit, God's power, is given to those who truly desire it and who take the steps of consecration and devotion necessary to bring them into intimate contact with Jehovah and his blessed Son.

Even among those who have received present truth, we have reason to fear that some have received it not in the love of it, but merely in a spirit of curiosity, or with a view to having something which they can use as a means for bringing themselves into some place of prominence among the brethren. Such persons are dangerous characters—dangerous to themselves and their own best interests, and dangerous in their influence on the church. Such should be carefully avoided in the selection of leaders among the Lord's people, no matter what their natural gifts, riches, or talents may be.

PETER AT LYDDA AND JOPPA

— FEBRUARY 8.—ACTS 9:32-43.—

THE PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH—PETER CALLS AT LYDDA—PETER RESTORES ÆNEAS TO HEALTH—MANY TURN TO THE LORD—TABITHA SICKENS AND DIES—PETER RAISES TABITHA TO LIFE—A HUMBLE WOMAN'S FRIENDS.

"Jesus Christ maketh thee whole: arise."—Acts 9:34.

THE persecution which scattered the disciples throughout all Judea, and of which Saul was one of the leaders, subsided shortly after his conversion. It was followed by a period of rest, recuperation, edification, as mentioned in Acts 9:31. Paul's conversion may have had something to do with this rest but it was also contributed to by the arising of troubles between the Jews and Rome because of an effort on the part of Caligula Caesar to establish his statues as objects of worship in Judea, and even in the Temple itself.

The account says that there were saints which dwelt at Lydda. Evidently they were scattered about in various places and the apostles spent part of their time in visiting the little groups of believers with a view to encouraging them and to strengthening their hope. In these travels Peter came to Lydda, the chief city in the plain of Sharon, about midway between Jerusalem and Joppa—ten miles from each.

The special mission was to visit the saints who resided there. This word "saints" is one of particular attractiveness. It signifies holy ones, those believers who are being sanctified in Christ Jesus.

ÆNEAS, THE PARALYTIC, HEALED

While at Lydda the Apostle found a certain paralytic. Æneas by name, whom he healed. We are not told that he was one of the saints; the presumption, therefore, is that he was not, but that at most he was the friend of some of them and that in this manner the Apostle's attention was drawn to him. The fact that he had been bedfast, helpless, eight years, testified that the healing was a miracle. Its fame spread abroad and resulted, we are told, in the drawing of many people unto the Lord and to the church. Thus did the Lord establish the church and attract to it those who were in the right attitude of heart, using miracles then, as he now uses other means. Those miracles, as already pointed out, cannot have lasted much longer than the apostles themselves; the gifts of healing, etc., being granted only through the laying on of the apostles' hands; and the twelve had no successors; the heavenly Jerusalem had twelve foundations, and no more, and in them were written the names of the twelve apostles and no others.

VALUE OF GOOD WORKS AND ALMSDEEDS

One of the disciples, that is, probably one of the saints or consecrated believers who resided at Joppa, on the seacoast, was apparently a woman of some means and education and, if her name represented her appearance, she was very beautiful. Tabitha was her Syriac name, and Dorcas was its Greek transliteration; it signifies graceful, beautiful. But this woman was famed for a beauty and grace entirely separate and distinct from whatever she possessed of physical charm. Hers was the beauty of a meek and quiet spirit, full of love and helpfulness.

Dorcas had been in the *habit* (as the Greek text indicates) of assisting the poor with garments, and in similar services. It is almost certain, too, that she assisted them with words of encouragement and helpfulness, and ministered to them the truth. Under these circumstances it is not strange that her death should have produced sorrow, especially among the beneficiaries of her charities and among the numerous friends which a beautiful Christlike spirit of this kind is sure to make.

KINDNESS ACCORDING TO OPPORTUNITY

All of the Lord's saints are to be martyrs; their consecration is to lay down their lives in the service of the Lord, the brethren, and the truth; and as nearly as they can understand in the way which he directs them through his Word and through his providences. Our covenant is not one of self-preservation, but one of self-sacrifice. True, we are looking for and hoping for life eternal and glorious, as spirit beings; but the terms and conditions upon which we are Scripturally hoping to attain that perfect and new life are that we shall sacrifice what remains of this present

earthly life. Another thought that comes in this connection is that while our chief service under present conditions is the ministry of the spiritual food, spiritual drink, and spiritual clothing to the household of faith, nevertheless we are to remember that to the extent of our abilities and opportunities we are to do good unto all men.

Those who lack the opportunity or the wherewithal for generosity in this world's goods, so that they have nothing wherewith to minister, in a temporal way, to the necessities of the saints or others, should not forget that they have the still more precious, more valuable, more helpful, more cheering consolations of the spirit of the truth and kindness to dispense to such as are in any need. Would that all of the Lord's people would cultivate these Dorcas qualities, and thus become more and more beautiful and graceful in the eyes of their Lord, as well as in the eyes of the unprejudiced of the world!

AN AFFECTING DEATH CHAMBER SCENE

Apparently Dorcas fell sick and died suddenly at about the time that others of the saints at Joppa heard of Peter's being at Lydda and of the cure performed there. They sent for him immediately; probably having no thought of his performing such a miracle as to bring Dorcas back to life, but rather with the thought that they had lost a highly esteemed member of their little group and that Peter could give them some consolation. There was no telegraph or telephone or mail service then; and two of the brethren became the ministers to take the word to Peter, to request his presence, and that without delay. In the city of Jerusalem a corpse must be buried the same day, but in the smaller cities and villages it might lie as much as three days unburied. Peter's presence was wanted at once, before Dorcas would be buried; and he went at once.

An affecting scene was before Peter as he entered the death chamber. Poor widows and others were lamenting the loss of their friend, and showing the garments which they were wearing and which she had made for them. It surely was a noble tribute to the usefulness of her life. No millionaire has ever left monuments which will endure so long, or which will reflect so much glory on his character, as were left by this humble woman. And even the humblest and poorest of us may, to some extent, emulate this example and leave some such monuments of love and testimonies of appreciation behind us when we die.

We who are watching and looking forward to the close of our earthly journey, and that before very long, should see to it that our lives are spent day by day in such a manner that some will be happier for them and that our decease will be recognized by some, at least, as a loss.

Peter's most notable miracle was the bringing of Dorcas back from the portals of death. Like the other miracle reported in this lesson, it was peculiar to that time, and had the special purpose of establishing the church. We are not to suppose that all of God's people during this gospel age should be thus snatched back from death, nor that they should be all relieved from beds of sickness, nor that they should all have power such as the Apostle here exercised. There is a ministry effected by evils (calamity, sickness, death) which has often been valuable indeed to the Lord's people, inculcating various lessons and developing various fruits of the spirit. After consecrating our lives to the Lord, let us see to it that we exercise faith in him on whom we have believed, and that we be persuaded that he is able to keep guard over all of our interests against the day of glorification and final reward. Divine wisdom is much more able to mete out to us those experiences, is much more able to bring us into contact with those influences which will work for our own development and growth as new creatures than we ourselves could do. Even our Lord Jesus had this attitude of mind when he said: "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"—John 8:11.

PETER AND CORNELIUS

—FEBRUARY 15.—ACTS 10:30-48—

CORNELIUS AND HIS VISION—HIS PRAYERS AND HIS ALMS ASCEND TO GOD IN DUE TIME—THE VISION GIVEN TO PETER—THE FIRST PREACHING TO THE GENTILES—THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CONVERSION OF CORNELIUS.

"The same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon him."—Romans 10:12.

MANY people, even Christians, seem to misunderstand the Apostle's statement that "God is no respecter of persons"; they apply these words in a very different way from that in which the Apostle used them. The Apostle perceived that God is a respecter of character; but that he is not a respecter of outward appearances, conditions, color of skin, nationality, etc., since the expiration of God's special favor to the Jews. For more than eighteen centuries God has been a respecter of persons: he had respected the persons of the natural seed of Abraham and had given them much advantage every way. (Romans 3:1) It was not to the discredit of any Jew to think that God would not extend his favor to the Gentiles, because all they had known or been taught tended to substantiate this view in their minds.

But three and one-half years after the cross, the period which God had set apart as marking his special mercy and favor to his chosen fleshly people expired and from that time to this, both Jews and Gentiles approach God by one channel and in one manner, namely, by full and complete personal consecration, having accepted Christ Jesus as their Redeemer and Savior from sin. Prior to that point of time and on and after the Day of Pentecost, Jews could be transferred from Moses, or the House of Servants, into Christ, or the House of Sons. (Hebrews 3:5, 6; Romans 11) But now a new period in the divine dispensation had arrived and it required a miraculous vision to assure the Apostle that it was God's will for him to go and preach to the Gentiles. Here Peter had the privilege of fulfilling the promise which his Lord had given him, namely, that he should operate the keys of the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 16:19) He had exercised this authority on behalf of the Jewish believers on the Day of Pentecost and now that promise was completely fulfilled—the door was open for both Jew and Gentile into the kingdom class of joint heirs with Christ.

When the Apostle appeared at Cornelius' home and perceived that Cornelius had had direction concerning the matter and that his faith had prompted him to gather his household, and perhaps relatives and friends, he gave utterance to the words: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him".—Verses 34, 35.

DIVINE FELLOWSHIP NOT FOR ALL

It is a misapprehension, far too common, that anybody and everybody may come to the Lord upon terms of intimacy and familiarity. In consequence of such misapprehensions many approach the fountain of grace without authority, without invitation, and without acceptance; because (ignoring the Apostle's words) they do not fear the Lord, and are not workers of righteousness, and are not accepted with him.

Lack of instruction, and mis-instruction by Christians, are responsible for much of this wrong condition existing in nominal Christendom. Let us learn to follow carefully the Scriptural program and precedent; let us not give the impression that God is no respecter of character. Let us, on the contrary, as Peter did, point out that reverence for God is essential; that an endeavor to live righteously is an essential, a reformation of life, a turning from sin to righteousness; and that, even then, none can be acceptable to God except through the appointed way—faith in the atonement work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Cornelius, the centurion, whose acceptance with God is the subject of this lesson, was evidently converted to God and to righteousness years prior to this incident. Indeed, tradition has it, that he was the same centurion whose servant was healed in response to his entreaty presented before the Master. But this is the testimony of the Word: he was a worshiper of God, a benevolent almsgiver, and his love of righteousness and his consistent life were recognized

among those with whom he had to do; yet, something more was necessary before he could be accepted with God in the proper sense of that word. There is a lesson here for those who imagine that a reverence for God and morality are all that is necessary to divine acceptance, as Cornelius had these qualities in large measure for some time before his acceptance. The Lord's dealing with him may well be a guide for all others who desire to approach him in covenant relationship.

Although devout, Cornelius was not a Jew; and he realized himself to be outside the pale of special divine favor. Still he prayed to God; we are not told for what he prayed, but in harmony with the records we may readily suppose that he prayed for enlightenment respecting the divine character and plan, and for a closer approach to and a deeper realization of divine favor and acceptance. Perhaps he had learned considerable of Jesus and was perplexed on this very subject; perhaps this fact led him to the earnest prayers which the Lord saw fit to answer in a miraculous manner, sending an angel to him and assuring him that his prayers and his alms were appreciated of the Lord as memorials of his piety.—Verse 4.

The angel intimated that something further than prayers and good deeds was necessary; but the additional things the angel was not commissioned to tell. Cornelius needed to know of the Lord Jesus from the true standpoint: he must exercise faith in him as his Redeemer, before the memorials of his piety would count for anything with God, or bring him into the desired relationship and under the divine favor.

JEHOVAH'S HUMBLE INSTRUMENTALITIES

We know very well that the Lord could have promulgated the Gospel through the instrumentality of angels; but here, as elsewhere, we see that this was not his purpose; that he was pleased to use consecrated human sons as his ambassadors, to proclaim "the good tidings of great joy . . . for all people". What a great honor God has thus done us who "were by nature children of wrath, even as others" of the race, but who, having accepted divine favor in Christ, are not only "accepted in the Beloved" but are made channels of divine blessing and favor in the calling out of others. The divine course in this respect has not only been an honor to his adopted children, but, additionally, it has been a blessing; for what Christian does not know from experience that great blessings come upon all who are faithful in serving the Word to others? "He that watereth shall be watered also himself."—Proverbs 11:25.

Cornelius was instructed to send for the Apostle Peter and was informed in advance that certain *words* he would tell him were of importance; they would be essential to his further progress in knowledge and in faith; it would be through these words that he would be led into divine favor. Cornelius' readiness of mind is shown by the promptness of his obedience. He not only prayed, but prepared to co-operate with God in the answering of his own prayers. The three persons sent after Peter (two of them household servants, and one of them a soldier, all devout persons, who feared God) give us good evidence that this Gentile was feeling after God, and striving to the best of his ability to please and honor him, and not been keeping his light and his primary faith under a bushel. It had shone out before his family and servants and before the soldiers under his control. This is the kind of man whom God delights to acknowledge, whatever may be his nationality or the color of his skin, and all such are recognized of the Lord and favored above others with light and truth, ever since the close of typical Israel's special favor. There is a lesson here that some of the Lord's people need. It is that they should let the light of the truth shine through them upon all with whom they come in contact. The spirit of devotion should pervade every family, every household, including the servants.

Evidently Cornelius was full of faith in the Lord. He did not wait to see if Peter would come; he felt confident that he would come; he had faith in the Lord's promise through the angel: accordingly, he gathered together his friends and relatives and household, those upon whom he had been exercising influence, and who, like himself, were pious and earnestly desirous of knowing all that they might learn concerning the way of life, concerning the way of reconciliation and harmony with God and all the principles of righteousness which he represents.

TWO NOBLE MEN MEET

When Peter arrived at the house of Cornelius, and the latter saw him and recognized him as God's appointed servant for the bringing of this message to him, he prostrated himself at Peter's feet in worship. How different Cornelius was from the majority of Romans, especially of Roman soldiers and officers! Instead of looking down upon the Jew, instead of thinking of himself as a representative of the greatest government of the world, at the time, Cornelius was filled with the spirit of humility, and the fact that his visitor represented the Lord called forth from him some of the same feelings that were filling his heart with respect toward the Lord himself—feelings of reverence.

But if the Centurion was noble and humble, the Apostle Peter showed himself in response to be no less noble and loyal to God; for he at once began to lift up the Centurion, saying, "Stand up; I myself also am a man". (Verse 26) Peter commends himself to our hearts by this noble course, by this refusal to receive unauthorized homage; and he saved himself also from a great deal of trial by thus disowning supernatural honor and authority promptly by recognizing his true position, that he was only a broken and empty vessel, valuable only because of the filling of the vessel with the Lord's spirit: distinguished only because the Lord had been pleased to use him as a vessel of mercy and truth.

Not many today are disposed to offer worship to fellow creatures, and not many, except high dignitaries in ecclesiastical organizations, such as popes and prelates, consent to receive worship; but all such have a rebuke in the course of the Apostle Peter in this case. There is, perhaps, little danger in our day that any of the brethren would receive too much honor of men, because the spirit of our time is running in the opposite direction. Nevertheless, wherever a spirit of servility is manifest, it becomes the duty of the brother to whom it is offered to refuse it; and to point his fellow servant to the Lord as the real benefactor of us all, from whom comes every good and perfect gift, by whatever channels he may be pleased to use.

Peter coming into the house and finding a congregation of earnest, God-fearing Gentiles assembled, asked the pointed question: "For what intent have ye sent for me?" (Verse 29) Cornelius then related something of his past experience, his desire for fellowship with God and his endeavor to live in a manner pleasing to him, the vision that he had received, and now Peter's arrival in response to that vision, and his expectancy that he was about to hear what had been promised him. He was not saved by his almsgiving, not saved by his prayers, nor yet by the message which Peter delivered; but Peter's message, "words," explaining matters, enabled Cornelius and his household to *grasp by faith* the great redemption which is in Christ Jesus, and thus to be saved.

JESUS AND HIM CRUCIFIED

We note with keen interest the Apostle's preaching, that we may clearly discern the life-giving message which he brought, from which Cornelius and his associates derived their saving faith. We find that Peter's discourse was the same gospel message which he had delivered repeatedly before. It was Jesus, the good, the benign, and the sacrifice for sins which he accomplished when he died on the cross. It was the message of the hope of a resurrection from the dead through Jesus, as attested in his resurrection by the mighty power of God. It was the message that a ransom for sinners having been provided the Lord is now pleased

to accept imperfect beings on conditions of faith, reverence, and obedience to righteousness according to ability. Peter's discourse was the old, old story, which to many has become tedious and distasteful; but which to every soul in the right attitude is the Father's message of forgiveness of sins, and reconciliation through the death of his Son. This is the same message which God is still sending by all who are his true ambassadors. There is no other gospel, and those who present another message are not, in their service, ambassadors for God, nor ministers and mouthpieces of his spirit.

The Apostle Paul tells us that "it pleased God through the foolishness of preaching to save them which believe". That is, it pleased God to adopt this method of declaring the truth respecting his redemptive plan and to accept and justify those who would believe and accept this testimony. The testimony may reach people today through letters and tracts or books, or through oral preaching. It matters not what manner; it simply matters that the true message shall be delivered, and received; but the message comes invariably, through the human channel, and not through angels, nor by the holy spirit's power or operation aside from human agents. We are to bear in mind these lessons of God's methods, and to apply them appropriately in connection with the affairs of life. We are not to expect the Lord to move upon or instruct our friends or kindred or neighbors; but are to remember that this honor he has conferred upon his "royal priesthood"; and accordingly we are to be "not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;" serving the truth in any and every manner open to us.

JUDGMENT OF QUICK AND DEAD

After delivering the message itself, Peter explained to Cornelius that Jesus commanded the apostles to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of the quick and the dead. (Verse 42) The coming judgment, or trial, of the world is an important part of the gospel message; and is not to be excluded in the preaching of the gospel.

What advantage could accrue to the world through the death of Christ if there were no future judgment or trial for them? All were judged once in the person of Adam; and his condemnation passed upon all. The world needs no further judgment along the lines of the Adamic transgression and its weaknesses. The sentence for that transgression was complete, and leaves nothing that could be added. The Judge was Jehovah himself, and the sentence was death. And now the good tidings includes the fact that Christ is to be the Judge of the world. This signifies that a new trial for life is to be accorded to Adam and his race. This of itself implies a release from the original death sentence; it implies a redemption from the Adamic sentence, and an individual trial to determine which members of the redeemed and to-be-tried race will be accounted worthy of everlasting life. Yes, this is "good tidings of great joy" for the world; even though the great adversary has deluded the vast majority, even of Christians, into thinking that no new trial is to be granted to the whole world, bought with the precious blood of Christ.

Peter, in discoursing upon the matter, evidently had his mind more widely open than ever before to a realization of what our Lord meant in giving the general commission to preach the gospel, not merely to the Jews, but to whoever would have an ear to hear. Peter was not expecting "ears" among the Gentiles; but now he perceived that God was not a respecter of nations and features, but that the message was open to all, and he did his best to present it. He proceeded to show that Jesus, as the Messiah, was not evidenced merely by the things connected with his ministry and the ministry of his followers; but that all these things were foreknown to God, and planned, and foretold through the holy prophets of Israel, and that only in and through the name and merit of Jesus, only to those exercising faith in him, was God pleased to show a reconciled face, and from such only was he willing to take away all sin and shame, and to adopt them into his family.

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Newbern, N. C.	" 8	Petersburg, Va.	" 15
Vanceboro, N. C.	" 9	Richmond, Va.	" 16
Scotland Neck, N. C. ..	" 11	Washington, D. C.	" 18
Rocky Mount, N. C.	" 12	Baltimore, Md.	" 18
Enfield, N. C.	" 13	Wilmington, Del.	" 19

BROTHER B. H. BOYD

Ada, Okla.	Jan. 5	Durant, Okla.	Jan. 12
Konawa, Okla.	" 6	Crystal, Okla.	" 13
Madill, Okla.	" 7	Atoka, Okla.	" 15
Ardmore, Okla.	" 8	McAlester, Okla.	" 16
Wapanucka, Okla.	" 9	Wilburton, Okla.	" 19
Coleman, Okla.	" 11	Porum, Okla.	" 19

BROTHER E. P. CRIST

Chicago, Ill.	Jan. 4	Milwaukee, Wis.	Jan. 11
Des Plaines, Ill.	" 5	Madison, Wis.	" 12
Waukegan, Ill.	" 6	Gratiot, Wis.	" 13
Zion City, Ill.	" 7	Freeport, Ill.	" 14
Racine, Wis.	" 8	Rockford, Ill.	" 15
Waukesha, Wis.	" 9	Rochelle, Ill.	" 16

BROTHER A. J. ESHLEMAN

Tampa, Fla.	Jan. 4	Jacksonville, Fla.	Jan. 14, 15
Miami, Fla.	" 7, 8	Dowling Park, Fla.	" 16
Sanford, Fla.	" 9	Bainbridge, Ga.	" 18
Orlando, Fla.	" 11	Bronwood, Ga.	" 19
Apopka, Fla.	" 12	Columbus, Ga.	" 20
Grand Island, Fla.	" 13	Tzgerald, Ga.	" 21

BROTHER M. L. HERR

Atlanta, Ga.	Jan. 4, 5	Rock Springs, Ga.	Jan. 12
Dallas, Ga.	" 6	Chattanooga, Tenn.	" 13
Rockmart, Ga.	" 7	Albany, Ala.	" 14
Cedartown, Ga.	" 8	Tusculumbia, Ala.	" 15
Tallapoosa, Ga.	" 11	Cullman, Ala.	" 16, 17
Rome, Ga.	" 11	Birmingham, Ala.	" 18

BROTHER G. S. KENDALL

Texaskana, Tex.	Jan. 10	Birtheright, Tex.	Jan. 16
Shreveport, La.	" 11	Sherman, Tex.	" 18
Big Sandy, Tex.	" 12	Denison, Tex.	" 18
Phano, Tex.	" 13	Paris, Tex.	" 19
McKinney, Tex.	" 14	Winnboro, Tex.	" 21
Greenville, Tex.	" 15	Dallas, Tex.	" 23

BROTHER W. H. PICKERING

Evansville, Ind.	Jan. 5	Brazil, Ind.	Jan. 12
Boonville, Ind.	" 6	Bicknell, Ind.	" 13
Wadesville, Ind.	" 7	Washington, Ind.	" 14
Vincennes, Ind.	" 8	Mitchell, Ind.	" 15
Sullivan, Ind.	" 9	Louisville, Ky.	" 16, 17
Terre Haute, Ind.	" 11	Bedford, Ind.	" 20

BROTHER V. C. RICE

Pride, La.	Jan. 6	Hattiesburg, Miss.	Jan. 18, 19
Baton Rouge, La.	" 7	Laurel, Miss.	" 20
Folsom, La.	" 9, 10	Louin, Miss.	" 21
New Orleans, La.	" 11, 12	Waynesboro, Miss.	" 22, 23
Bogalusa, La.	" 14, 15	West Point, Miss.	" 25
Wanilla, Miss.	" 16	Columbus, Miss.	" 26

BROTHER R. L. ROBIE

Maplewood, Pa.	Jan. 6	Northampton, Pa.	Jan. 13
Wilkes-Barre, Pa.	" 7	Allentown, Pa.	" 14
White Haven, Pa.	" 8	Easton, Pa.	" 15
Lehighton, Pa.	" 9	Pen Argyl, Pa.	" 16
Kunkletown, Pa.	" 11	East Stroudsburg, Pa.	" 18
Palmerton, Pa.	" 12	Jansdale, Pa.	" 19

BROTHER O. L. SULLIVAN

Midland, Ohio	Jan. 8	Lancaster, Ohio	Jan. 15
Cincinnati, Ohio	" 9	Crooksville, Ohio	" 16
Portsmouth, Ohio	" 11	Elwood City, Pa.	" 18
Ironton, Ohio	" 12	Pittsburgh, Pa.	" 19
Wellston, Ohio	" 13	Zanesville, Ohio	" 20
Nelsonville, Ohio	" 14	Newark, Ohio	" 21

BROTHER W. J. THORN

Temple, Tex.	Jan. 6, 7	Goldsboro, Tex.	Jan. 16
Belton, Tex.	" 8	Gustine, Tex.	" 18
Lampasas, Tex.	" 9	Purmeta, Tex.	" 19
Brownwood, Tex.	" 11	Stephenville, Tex.	" 20
Brooksmith, Tex.	" 12	Dublin, Tex.	" 21
Miles, Tex.	" 14	Weatherford, Tex.	" 22

BROTHER S. H. TOUTJIAN

Vancouver, Wash.	Jan. 9	Roseburg, Ore.	Jan. 18
Portland, Ore.	" 11	Rogue River, Ore.	" 19
Salem, Ore.	" 12	Medford, Ore.	" 21
Dallas, Ore.	" 13, 14	Ashland, Ore.	" 22
Eugene, Ore.	" 15	Chico, Cal.	" 24
Eastside, Ore.	" 17	Sacramento, Cal.	" 25

BROTHER J. A. BAEUERLEIN

Stottville, N. Y.	Jan. 4	Waterbury, Conn.	Jan. 11
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BROTHER E. W. BETLER

Springfield, Mass.	Jan. 4	Providence, R. I.	Jan. 11
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BROTHER L. T. COHEN

Dover, N. J.	Jan. 4	Beacon, N. Y.	Jan. 11
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BROTHER E. J. COWARD

Albany, N. Y.	Jan. 4	Tamaqua, Pa.	Jan. 11
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BROTHER E. L. DOCKEY

Elizabeth, N. J.	Jan. 4	Schenectady, N. Y.	Jan. 11
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BROTHER A. D. ESHLEMAN

Hicksville, N. Y.	Jan. 4	White Haven, Pa.	Jan. 11
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BROTHER A. R. GOUX

Valley Stream, N. Y.	Jan. 4	Dover, N. J.	Jan. 11
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BROTHER G. H. FISHER

Easton, Pa.	Jan. 4	New Brunswick, N. J.	Jan. 11
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BROTHER H. E. HAZLETT

New London, Conn.	Jan. 4	Rochester, N. Y.	Jan. 11
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BROTHER W. F. HUDGINGS

Johnstown, Pa.	Jan. 4	Elmira, N. Y.	Jan. 11
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BROTHER J. H. HOEVELER

Brooklyn, N. Y.	Jan. 4	Tarrytown, N. Y.	Jan. 11
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BROTHER A. H. MACMILLAN

Pittsburgh, Pa.	Jan. 4	Gloversville, N. Y.	Jan. 11
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BROTHER R. J. MARTIN

Altoona, Pa.	Jan. 4	Reading, Pa.	Jan. 11
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BROTHER C. E. MYERS

Bridgeton, N. J.	Jan. 4	Clinton, N. J.	Jan. 11
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BROTHER H. H. RIEMER

Wilkes-Barre, Pa.	Jan. 4	Paterson, N. J.	Jan. 11
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BROTHER F. H. ROBISON

New Haven, Conn.	Jan. 4	Pottsville, Pa.	Jan. 11
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BROTHER H. A. SEKLEMIAN

Reading, Pa.	Jan. 4	Camden, N. J.	Jan. 11
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BROTHER W. E. VAN AMBURGH

Buffalo, N. Y.	Jan. 4	Lancaster, Pa.	Jan. 11
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BROTHER C. A. WISE

Utica, N. Y.	Jan. 4	Columbus, Ohio	Jan. 11
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BROTHER C. H. ZOOK

Newark, N. J.	Jan. 4	Bangor, Pa.	Jan. 11
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BETHEL HYMNS FOR FEBRUARY

After the close of the hymn the Bethel family listens to the reading of "My Vow Unto the Lord", then joins in prayer. At the breakfast table the Manna text is considered.

(1) 74; (2) 128; (3) 95; (4) 261; (5) 166; (6) 110; (7) 165; (8) 233; (9) 119; (10) 196; (11) 328; (12) 267; (13) 198; (14) 8; (15) 114; (16) 273; (17) 203; (18) 113; (19) 130; (20) 277; (21) 87; (22) 99; (23) 242; (24) 145; (25) 93; (26) 248; (27) 185; (28) 298; (29) 109.