

chance (?) sentence or two of mine one day in the shop raised a question in his mind which I was only too glad to answer. The seed seemed to light on good soil, and I gave him the first volume to read, then the second and third. Of course profanity had to go, and then tobacco and so on, and he is really making remarkable progress. Your brother in the Lord,
C. B. SHULL.—Ohio.

DEAR FRIENDS:—Our volunteer report is tardy, but the churches have comparatively few in attendance until the weather begins to be unfavorable at the beaches, at which time also the tourists begin to reach here, making it more favorable to await.

We received 14,000 TOWERS for distribution, only 400 of which are on hand; these remaining ones we will see are properly disposed of.

Our volunteers have manifested more love and zeal, I think, than in the past, and feel they were disappointed to find the work completed for this time. We meet more opposition than ever in the past. One minister came out the church and said he would see to it that there were laws passed which would stop this distribution of literature. When he left his church his farewell sermon was against this truth. In private, this same man said he thought he would do God a service to take the lives of such people who held such devilish doctrines.

We served about 110 churches in L—A—and about 21 churches in surrounding towns. The friends at P— served their churches alone this year.

We thank you all for your share in this work, your labor of love, and are grateful for the privilege we have in service, and trust we may receive more ammunition for future work. Sincerely yours in Him,
ROBT. NAIRN.—California.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I received box of tracts some time ago with joy. It gives me joy to read the report in the TOWER at the last of the year—to know of the tons of glad tidings going forth in search of wheat grains. I have filled out and mailed all the addressed wrappers you sent me for India and other foreign countries, without the loss of one. I have, by the Lord's help, mailed over forty-seven thousand tracts since March 26, 1901, including the India and foreign mail, besides about twelve thousand before that date, while I was not so deeply interested. As I am appointed by the community of this place and the Postoffice Department to hold the office of postmaster, the Lord, I think, has opened a way for me to work. I wish to use it, so long as it will be opened, for the good work, as I fear soon we will not be permitted to distribute the glad tidings. The Lord said, "Work while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work." Your unworthy servant in the Lord,
J. L. FREED.—Pennsylvania.

LIFE AND DEATH

So he died for his faith; that is fine—
More than most of us do.
But stay, can you add to that line
That he lived for it, too?

In his death he bore witness at last
As a martyr to truth;
Did his life do the same in the past,
From the days of his youth?

It is easy to die; men have died
For a wish or a whim—
From bravado or passion or pride—
Was it harder for him?

But to live—every day to live out
All the truth that he dreamt,
While his friends met his conduct with doubt,
And the world with contempt;—

Was it thus that he plodded ahead,
Never turning aside?
Then we'll talk of the life that he led—
Never mind how he died.

—Ernest Crosby.

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE GROANING CREATION

The greatest affliction of the world is discontent: the great prosperity of the few causes the masses to "fret," and the more so as knowledge increases. Individually and nationally the world is restless. Yet statesmen especially are fearful of war—fearful, too, that despite their desire to avoid it something may enkindle the blaze which may involve all Europe. (1) Trouble is feared in Macedonia, an eastern province of Turkey, peopled by so-called Christians who are in a state of ferment because of various oppressions. The country under the misrule of Turkey is, according to apparently reliable accounts, so infested with robbers, "brigands," that neither life nor property is safe. The Turkish tax-gatherers oppress the people. The result is discouragement, and anarchy is expected in the spring. This will call for Turkish soldiers and a general and terrible slaughter is expected.

(2) The further fear is that Russia will seize such an occasion and join in the war;—either because of the sympathy of the people of Russia for all Greek Catholics or with a desire on the part of their government to seize more territory. (3) It is generally admitted that this might lead to further strife between the great powers of Europe. This might start a flame of war which might be difficult to extinguish; for (4) Austria-Hungary is in a bad way—almost ready for civil war. (5) Italy has a grudge against Austria of 37 years' standing, which one of her chief ministers of state recently referred to publicly. (6) France still nurses her grudge against Germany and wants back Alsace and Lorraine. (7) Germany is approaching some kind of a crisis: Socialism there is growing so rapidly that all the other political parties have been compelled to unite to oppose it. The three old parties have just entered into an agreement that whichever party polled the largest vote in each district at the last election shall have the support of the others as against Socialism. This will probably keep the Socialists from getting full control until

the subsequent election.—1908. Then they and the Kaiser will have a settlement.

NEWER METHODS IN WINNING SOULS

Under the above caption the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat* publishes the following account of a recent discourse:—

"Dr. David F. Bradley, president of Iowa College, Grinnell, Ia., occupied the pulpit of the First Congregational church yesterday morning and evening. At the morning service Dr. Bradley spoke from John 12:32: 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself.'

"Dr. Bradley asked if Jesus expected the fulfillment of the prophecy that all men would be drawn to him, and if the present indications pointed to its fulfillment, answering both questions in the affirmative.

"The Christian powers, he said, were dominating the earth, and this was especially true of the last century. St. Louis, with the vast territory of which it was the center, a hundred years ago was in savagery, but was now dedicated to Christianity. This condition was true not only of America, but of other countries.

"Africa, the dark continent of a few years ago, was now dominated by Christian countries, and slavery in all its hideous forms was rapidly being eliminated by the onward march of the Christian religion.

"The emancipation of Egypt by the occupation of the English, and the control of India, with its 250,000,000 of people, by a monarch who is the sworn defender of the faith, were indications that all men were being drawn to Christ.

"Russia, which had reclaimed northern Asia; Japan, which had joined the family of Christian nations, and the recent opening of China to the outside world, thus bringing one-third of the population of the earth in direct contact with the progressive peoples of other nations, showed that the fulfillment of the prophecy was near at hand.

"There was a closer unity of the nations of the world now than ever before. The introduction of the railroad, the telegraph and other facilities which bring all parts of the world into closer contact with one another, had done much toward spreading the teachings of the Christian religion.

"These facilities had also caused a wider dissemination of the English language, which was essentially the language of purity. This had done much to counteract the effects of the teachings of the native languages which were corrupt and unclean. All these things had worked for the inculcation of Christian ideas.

"The conditions at home were also more favorable than ever before. There was a greater unity among the churches. They were working not only independently for the regeneration of the world, but acting in concert for the same great end.

"In conclusion, Dr. Bradley said that everything was in favor of the optimist's views of the text, and pointed to its fulfilment. The time was not far distant when all men would be drawn to Christ."

* *

"Live and learn" is an old proverb; but it will take some of us a long time to learn that soldiers, steamboats, telegraphs, railroads and other modern conveniences are the new missionaries of the cross of Christ. It will be a long time before some of us learn that civilization is merely another name for Christianization. If it is still true that there is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved than the name of Jesus—through faith in his name and obedience to his Word—then some of us will be hard to convince that the millions who are receiving the blessings and conveniences of our day are thereby receiving Christ.

How blinding must be the education and title of a doctor of divinity;—"deceiving and being deceived." Others of far less opportunity can see clearly, that love of money, selfishness and discontent are devouring true religious instincts in all classes, and in all quarters. Others can see that, while benevolences are increasing and "a form of godliness" is maintained, vital piety, sanctity, consecration to God's will, as well as faith in the inspiration of the Scriptures, are waning rapidly in every direction.

If the whole world were civilized—as highly as the most civilized nations of "Christendom"—how far from the true Christian standard of saintship its millions would still be. How much need there would still be for us to pray: "Thy kingdom come! Thy will be done!—on earth, even as in heaven!"

THE OBSERVANCE OF LENT

The following is from the *Pittsburgh Post*:—

"The observance of Lent, formerly confined to the Roman Catholic, Episcopal and Lutheran churches, now extends to the religious public very generally; and for the society of fashionable gaiety quite universally it has become a period of relative asceticism.

"This extension of regard for the Lenten fast has been coincident with an actual or supposed loosening of the hold of religious doctrines on a large part of Protestantism, more especially. Whether there has been a diminution in the attendance on religious services generally during that period of declension we have no comparative statistics to enable us to determine, though it seems to have been proved that in New York at present the great majority of the population do not go to church on Sunday—something like two-thirds.

"A similar census in London shows that in 12 of the boroughs with a population exceeding two millions, only about one in five are church attendants, counting the number at both the morning and evening services, and only one-half of them at the Anglican churches. In New York, out of a total attendance of about four hundred and fifty thousand, nearly three-fourths were found in Roman Catholic churches; and of the rest of the attendance, about 30 per cent was in Episcopal and Lutheran churches.

"It appears, therefore, that of the people of New York who pay heed to religious observances, something like four-fifths frequent the churches which hold to the celebration of the Lenten fast. But, as we have already suggested, some special regard for that season is beginning to be paid by Protestant denominations which used to look on it as a detestable relic of 'Popery.' For example, we find in the *Christian Intelligence* of the Reformed Church, an appeal by the 'National Central Committee of the Twentieth Century Gospel Campaign,' a distinctively 'Evangelical' enterprise, that Ash Wednesday be observed by the churches as a special day of humiliation and prayer, 'That the praying may not be general and indefinite, the committee suggests the following topics:—

"1. For a return of absolute faith in the Bible, as the inspired, authoritative Word of God, and as furnishing the

churches *their only credentials and message*; and for an immediate revival of earnest and systematic study of that Word in order to learn what God would have us to do in the present conditions.

"2. For a quickened sense of the sinfulness of sin, and of man's lost and hopeless condition as a sinner in time and eternity.

"3. For a new vision of the greatness, sufficiency and efficacy of *the atonement of Jesus Christ wrought on the cross*, and to be *universally proclaimed* as the *only hope* for lost man.

"4. For an overwhelming sense of the obligations and responsibility on the part of every professed follower of Christ, for witnessing to the lost soul nearest him—and to all lost souls he can reach—of the dying love and saving power of Christ, and urging the immediate acceptance of *salvation by his blood*.

"5. For an immediate entrance of all Christians upon a campaign of personal work in seeking and winning lost souls, "beginning at Jerusalem"—at home—and reaching out to the uttermost parts of the earth.

"6. For a mighty outpouring of and endowment with, the holy spirit, that the church throughout the entire nation may, by his enlightening influence, be brought to understand these *life and death* truths and be guided in meeting these awful and inescapable responsibilities."

* * *

We read the above six topics with interest amounting to amazement. Whoever drafted that list was either "not far from the kingdom" and "an Israelite indeed," or else he was a hypocrite. We should be glad to learn that the entire committee agreed to the topics heartily and intelligently—appreciating specially the features which we have italicized. Our best wish for all the people of New York and of the whole world would be that all or at least some of them, may observe Lent and join in such petitions heartily: if but one in a hundred of those who will observe the Lenten season will do so, it will surely mean a great revival in their own hearts.

To us who observe the Memorial Supper on its anniversary only, the occasion is one of the greater solemnity, and may well be approached with the greater reverence. We commend to all of "this way" (Acts 9:2) that the interim between now and the Memorial (April 10th) be specially a season of prayer and fasting—drawing near to the Lord. (1 Cor. 7:5) True, the Lord's consecrated people are continually to live as separate from sin and from the mind of the flesh as possible, and are to "pray without ceasing;" but, as the Apostle intimates, there may profitably be special seasons of this kind; and surely none more appropriate than this Memorial season. The fasting which we urge may or may not affect the food and drink, according to the judgment of each, respecting what diet will best enable him to glorify God and to keep his "body under." We refer specially to abstinence from all "fleshly lusts which war against the soul;" these appetites always under restraint with the saints, may well be specially *mortified* at this time.

SOCIALISTS THANK MORGAN FOR AID

The following we clip from the *North American*, a thoroughly reliable journal:—

"The State committee of the Socialist party of Pennsylvania has instructed its secretary to send a letter to J. Pierpont Morgan to thank him, as the representative of the trusts, for the aid which monopolies are giving to the Socialist movement in the United States.

"According to the letter, Mr. Morgan does not know anything about Socialism, and does not see what propaganda work he is doing in furtherance of the co-operative commonwealth—the Socialist ideal.

"The great trust-maker is frankly told that he cannot help his actions as a Socialist agitator, being moved thereto by certain inevitable laws of economic development over which he has no control. The letter says the trusts have demonstrated the wastefulness of competition and the practicability of combination on a large scale. While the Socialists say they press forward toward that goal where the nation will own the trusts, they are careful to say that they are not adverse to taking remedial measures, en route, such as shorter hours, more wages, factory regulations, etc.

"Following is the letter in full:—

"To J. Pierpont Morgan, New York City.

"Dear Sir:—As a preface to this letter and as an excuse for the liberty we take in addressing you, we desire to say that we consider you one of the most notable characters the world has seen. At the same time we cannot forbear adding that we are of the opinion that you are an unconscious tool in the hands of natural forces, a chief factor in certain social and

economic tendencies, whereof you know not the meaning and of which you cannot see the end. You are the leader of the great modern so-called trust movement, which is doing more to prepare civilized countries for the advent of Socialism than all the feeble efforts of us working-men. We know, or at least have good grounds for supposing, that you honestly dislike Socialists without exactly knowing why. We cannot blame you for this, because you unwittingly manifest the feeling of your class. As your friend, Emperor William, frankly said, you know nothing about Socialism—"the great question of the day"—but then a man in your position does not, in the nature of things, have time to study social science.

"Political economy, as taught in all the schools today is an anachronism, holding that competition is the best means of advancing the welfare of society; whereas the successful operation of the trust has demonstrated at once the practicability of co-operation and the impossibility of a continuance of competition. The Socialists have maintained this for the last fifty years, in proof of which we refer you to the predictions of Karl Marx in *Das Kapital*.

"For years the recognized intellectual class has told us that production on a national or world-wide scale was impossible; that one man or group of men could not conduct such vast enterprises; that they would break down of their own weight—in short, that they were an ephemeral phase of economic development. We could not convince the intellectuals to the contrary; but the stern logic of events has proved the correctness of our position. The trust convinces the most obtuse.

"Our position, in brief, is as follows:—

"In the United States, as in all other civilized countries, the natural order of economic development has separated society into two antagonistic classes—the capitalistic, a comparatively small class, the possessors of all the means of production and distribution (land, mines, machinery and the means of transportation and communication), and the larger and ever-increasing class of wage-workers who possess no property at all. This economic supremacy has secured to the dominant class the full control of the government, the pulpit, the schools and the subsidized press. It has thus made the capitalist class the arbiter of the fate of the workers, whom it is reducing to a condition of dependence, economically exploited and oppressed, intellectually and physically crippled and degraded. Under these conditions their political equality is a bitter mockery. The present government is a conspiracy of organized and incorporated wealth, hiding behind and secretly manipulating the political machine.

"The contest between these two classes grows ever sharper. Hand-in-hand with the growth of monopolies goes the annihilation of small industries and of the middle class depending on them. Ever larger grows the multitude of destitute wage-workers and of the unemployed, and ever fiercer the struggle between the class of the exploiter and the exploited.

"Socialists demand that this struggle shall cease, but it will cease only with the elimination of its causes. To eliminate these causes it is necessary to abolish the private ownership of the modern tool of production—the trust—and place its ownership in the hands of the people. To accomplish this, it is necessary to arouse the wealth producers to a recognition of their class interest and weld them into a compact political force. This Socialists are doing, and the development of the trust constantly accelerates the movement.

"Our ultimate goal is the co-operative commonwealth, but in striving for it we do not hesitate to seize any oppor-

tunity to improve the condition of the working class, such as securing a shorter workday, increased wages, child labor laws, factory regulations, employers' liability acts, etc.

"The Socialist vote in the United States now numbers one-third of a million; in industrial Pennsylvania, 28,000; in intellectual Massachusetts, 40,000. These few facts, Mr. Morgan, constrain us to acknowledge our indebtedness to you and your class for demonstrating the practicability and inevitability of Socialism.

"Yours truly,

FRED LONG, Secretary.

"By direction of the State committee."

RECENT ALLEGHENY "CHART-TALKS"

Replying to many letters of inquiry, we report to all friends of the cause that the six meetings held here recently in Carnegie Music Hall—instead of in our usual chapel—to afford opportunity for the public—were quite successful, so far as human judgment can determine. The attendance was good; at the first meeting at least 600 and at the others 800 or over, each. The audiences were not aristocratic, but very intelligent, and almost exclusively of the middle aged and elderly. The closest of attention was given, although the discourses were three or four times as long as many of the auditors were accustomed to.

We cannot doubt that some prejudices and misconceptions were removed; and we certainly trust that some were led to clearer views of our gracious heavenly Father and his plans for man's salvation. Let us hope also that some who heard will be drawn by the cords of love nearer to the Lord. We can only do our best and leave all results with the Lord. It is his work specially, and ours only as his mouthpieces and representatives. The speaker and all of the Allegheny church were surely blessed in the efforts put forth to reach with the truth "brethren" still in "Babylon."

CHANGES IN THE EUROPEAN ITINERARY

We are advised by our Swiss brethren that arrangements have been made for a General Convention of German and Swiss friends, to be held at Zurich, Switzerland, May 31 and June 1, at which a large number of friends is expected. We, therefore, change the date of the Editor's visit in that vicinity to conform with this arrangement, and announce that he will be at Zurich May 31 and June 1, instead of May 23 and 24.

In view of increasing interest in Ireland, we have decided to include that country in the visit, and, if the hoped-for arrangements for public meetings are made, they will be as follows:—

Dublin	May 21, 22.
Belfast	May 24.

In all these places he will be very pleased to greet the interested, and trusts that as far as practicable, these will make themselves known to him.

BROTHER HENNINGES GOES ABROAD

Believing that the general interests of the work hoped to be accomplished through the Editor's visit abroad will be thereby advanced, it has been decided that Brother E. C. Hennings shall go, too. Indeed, he goes before—hoping to assist in making arrangements for the meetings and in gathering information necessary to the determining of the further course of operations in various parts of Europe. He is sure of a cordial welcome, and looks forward with pleasure to meeting the friends of present truth in London on April 5th, and also on the Memorial occasion, April 10th, and to accompanying the Editor, as above.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF ELDERSHIP

ACTS 20:28-38.—APRIL 5.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."

The Apostle Paul, on leaving Ephesus after the rioting there, determined to visit Jerusalem again, but first would visit the European churches—of Macedonia and Greece. It was while in Macedonia that he is supposed to have written his second letter to the Corinthians; and, on this tour, while in Corinth for about three months, he is supposed to have written his epistle to the Romans. At this time Nero, aged 21, was Emperor of Rome, and the Apostle Paul was about 56 years of age—in the full prime of his Christian life and experience.

Our lesson finds the Apostle en route to Jerusalem, on a trading vessel which was detained at the port of Miletus, about thirty miles distant from Ephesus. The number of days the vessel would be detained, changing cargo, etc., was uncertain; hence, the Apostle, instead of going to Ephesus, sent word to the elders of the church there that they might come to him at Miletus—that thus he might have as long as pos-

sible with them, without missing his vessel when it would be ready to start. The elders came, and our lesson records the Apostle's address to them. They may have stayed several days in his company, and probably he said much more, but the final words evidently, in the mind of Luke, who chronicled them, were an epitome of the entire address, which is generally esteemed as both eloquent and touching. It is an address from a general overseer to local overseers, and to be appreciated must be viewed from this standpoint.

"Take heed unto yourselves:" well did the Apostle realize that those who do not keep guard over their own hearts can not faithfully serve the interests of the church in general. Piety, as well as charity, should begin at home. Along this line John Calvin said, "No one can successfully care for the salvation of others who neglects his own, since he himself is a part of the flock." This thought is brought out by the

Apostle, also, saying, "And [take heed] to all the flock, over the which the holy Spirit hath made you overseers"—more properly, "In the which," as in the Revised Version; for the overseers are not to be considered lords *over* the flock, but members in it who have a responsibility respecting fellow-members. The care of the overseer should not be confined to the well-favored members of the flock, financially, socially, educationally or otherwise; but as the Apostle declares, should be general "to *all* the flock"—including the poorest as well as the most uncouth naturally.

The elders were not necessarily aged men, according to the flesh; for in the church of Christ the flesh is reckoned as dead;—their age, their maturity, their eldership, is as new creatures. Although the chosen representatives of the church, they were to esteem their responsibility as coming from on high;—however earthly influences had been associated with their appointment, their obligation was really as representatives of the Lord, through his holy spirit. The word "Elders" here is the same as Presbytery in 1 Tim. 4:14; and the word "overseers" is the same elsewhere in the Scriptures rendered "bishop," signifying one charged with a duty respecting others. We thus see that this word bishop, or over-seer, has in modern times been divested of its original simplicity. The elders of the church of Christ are its overseers, and should realize the responsibility of the position they have accepted. The Apostle Paul was an overseer in a general sense; as he himself expresses it, he had "the care of all the churches"—particularly of all those which, in the Lord's providence, he had been the means of establishing in the truth, or who accepted his ministry, either in person or by letter. While the holy spirit has the supervision of such matters, it, nevertheless, remains for the congregation of the Lord's people to note the leadings of the spirit in the appointment of overseers, and to accept such, and only such, and so much overseeing and supervision as they believe to be of the Lord's providence.

Mr. Thompson-Seton, the renowned student of wild animals, relates in his work, "*Lives of the Hunted*," that "the leaders of the flock gain and hold their position as leaders, not from any authority over the flock, but from the fact that they have shown themselves wisest in finding the best pastures and the most successful in guarding against enemies,—the flock having learned to trust them." This furnishes a good illustration of what the attitude of the Lord's people should be toward those whom they accept as superintendents, overseers, elders,—according to the Scriptures. But alas! we find in the church nominal many leaders who seem to be nearly devoid of the proper qualities of leadership here referred to by the Apostle: (1) to oversee, or look out for, the interests of the flock in general; and (2) to feed them. It should be observed that the position of a bishop gives no *authority* over the church, except that which properly comes from great piety, wisdom and experience. The flock is to be guarded against errors of doctrine, and from false teachers, and to be guided into the richest pastures of the Word of God, and into the brightest Christian experiences, and into the fields of greatest usefulness.

A prominent writer on this subject says:—

"Mr. Ruskin, in his *Sesame and Lilies*, commenting on the strange phrase, 'blind mouths,' in Milton's *Lycidas*, says: 'The e two monosyllables express the precisely accurate contraries of right character in the two great offices of the church—those of bishop and pastor. A bishop means a person who sees; a pastor means one who feeds; the most unbishoply character a man can have is, therefore, to be blind; the most unpastoral is, instead of feeding, to want to be fed. Nearly all the evils of the church have arisen from bishops desiring *power* more than *light*. They want authority, not outlook. It is the king's (Christ is our King) office to rule: the bishop's office is to *oversee* the flock, to number its sheep by sheep; to be ready always to give full account of it.'"

The Apostle states the grounds for so earnest an exhortation: (1) The church which they were overseeing and feeding was to be recognized as God's church, "purchased with the blood of his own [Son].*" That which God so highly valued, and purchased at so great a price, is to be esteemed very precious by all who would be his servants and its servants. (2) Because dangers and foes would arise; and while these could not come without divine permission, it is a part of the

divine will that they shall serve as tests of faith and loyalty of the entire flock, including the elders, overseers, pastors. The energy necessary to such resistance of evil would tend to develop character which God desires each member of his flock to have. God would not suffer them to be tempted above that they were able, but would with every temptation, or trial, provide a way of escape; but he would have them learn to trust him, to exercise faith and obedience and vigilance and resistance of evil.

The Apostle evidently knew by inspiration of some kind that he would never see these dear brethren again—that his mission in this field was at a close, and as a true under-shepherd he was looking out for the interests of the flock. He knew, probably from the prophecy of Daniel, that a great falling away was to come;—that the adversary was to be permitted to develop a great anti-Christ system,—as he subsequently wrote to the church at Thessalonica; and he wished the local overseers to realize the responsibility of their position, and to be vigilant. "Grievous wolves shall enter in amongst you, not sparing the flock;"—ambitious for power, influence, etc., they would not hesitate to barter the interests of the flock for their own advancement. Another source of danger would be from within—"of your own selves" some would rise up—be puffed up with ambition, to have followers, adherents, and would lead them into false doctrines, to the injury of themselves and those misled by them.

The knowledge of these things was to keep them on guard continually, not only as against wolves from without, but against the rising of ambitious ones amongst their own number—not necessarily watching each other merely, but rather each specially watching and guarding his own heart against the insidious attacks of the adversary along the lines indicated,—too great self-esteem or desire to be great. The Apostle, we may be sure, was glad to be able to point to his own course in their midst, as an example of proper humility of spirit, and of zeal for the interests of the flock. "Remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn [admonish] everyone day and night with tears." The secret of the Apostle's zeal lay, evidently, in his appreciation of the fact that he was God's ambassador, and that the work of the Lord in which he was privileged to be a coworker, is a most important one—relating first to the salvation and perfecting of the saints, the elect, and ultimately through them to the blessing of all the families of the earth. Had the Apostle, during those three years, been neglecting the spiritual interests of the flock, he could not have made such an address as this to the elders. It would not have done to have said: Ye remember how many entertainments of a frivolous character I attended with you and helped to arrange; the oyster suppers and peach-and-cream festivals; the private theatricals, charades and tableaux, and general fun and money-making schemes which we entered into. The Apostle's appreciation of the fact that he was an ambassador for the King of kings, was ever present with him and lent a force and earnestness to his entreaties on behalf of righteousness and spirituality, which, with his tears, were much better backing than frivolities of any kind.

Turning from the darker picture of coming trials and difficulties, the Apostle commended the brethren to the Lord, who loved his church so as to purchase it, who watches over its interests, so that the Adversary cannot harm those who faithfully follow the Captain of their salvation,—assuring them that this grace of God might be expected to come to them through his Word. The Apostle had nothing to say against colleges and seminaries and worldly sciences of themselves; but when he would mention the power that is to keep the Lord's people against the wiles of the adversary it was not to these that he pointed his collaborators, but to the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God. We of the present time may well lay this testimony to heart; for today we see foes assailing the Lord's flock on every hand; wolves who, in the name of science would not spare the flock, but dash to pieces the faith, the hope, the trust, of the Lord's people, giving them nothing substantial in return; "higher critics" vaunting themselves upon their superior learning and their ability to distinguish between inspiration and non-inspiration, and who offer to select for the sheep an occasional blade of grass from the Word of God, which, however, they assure the sheep, requires much scholastic learning to make nutritive.

Today, also, we see in every direction this same tendency on the part of some amongst ourselves to arise and to seek to draw away disciples after them; and we need to remember that the defense of the sheep is not to be found in worldly wisdom, but in the power of God, as represented in the Word and plan of God. As the Apostle said to these elders of Ephesus, so we may hear him say to us, that the Word of God is able to build us up substantially, to make us "strong

* This is not to be understood as conflicting with other Scriptural statements to the effect that our Lord Jesus "bought us with his own precious blood." Both thoughts are correct: though they view the subject from two different standpoints. From the larger standpoint, God is the originator of the entire plan of salvation—from start to finish he is thus the Savior. But he accomplishes the salvation through the Son. He laid help [for us] upon one who was mighty to save—fully qualified. (Isa. 43:11; 1 Tim. 2:5; 4:10; Psa. 89:19) Thus every feature of our salvation is of the Father, though by the Son, as the Apostle clearly points out—1 Cor. 8:6.

in the Lord and in the power of his might," and to give us eventually "an inheritance amongst all them which are sanctified."

It is worthy of note here that all the inheritances and eternal rewards held before the Lord's people in the Scriptures are to the "sanctified"—none of them are promised to any other class. One of the Society's colporteurs recently wrote us that when about to deliver a volume of the DAWN series to a person who had subscribed, the lady made objection, and declined to take the book, saying that she understood it denied that the Scriptures taught a hell of eternal torture; and that she was sure to the contrary, and that if there is no such place there ought to be. The colporteur replied by inquiring who she believed would be saved, and she answered, "The holy, the sanctified," the ones mentioned by the Apostle in this lesson. The colporteur asked the lady if she claimed to be one of the consecrated saints of God. She answered, "No." He then replied, "You are expecting them, to spend eternity in torment?"

The lady saw at once the force of the erroneous argument, and said she would take the book, concluding that if all were to go to eternal torment who were not of the sanctified class the outlook for the future would be horrible, for almost the entire race. What a relief we find in the clearer knowledge of the divine plan, which shows us that the inheritance of the sanctified is to be the kingdom, at the second advent of our Lord; and that the kingdom then to be established is to be the divine agency for blessing the world of mankind with a clear knowledge of God, and a full opportunity to accept his grace and mercy and blessing unto sanctification and everlasting life through our Lord Jesus.

Having commended them to the Word of God, the Apostle draws attention to his own mode of life, while with them, as a proper illustration of the effect of the Gospel in a sanctified heart—as a *proper example of an overseer and elder* in the church, which they should seek to copy. He could speak of these things now, to these fellow-elders, in a manner that he probably would have hesitated to speak of them to the church at Ephesus while still ministering to them, as, by some, it might have been considered boasting. He would have these brother-elders and overseers note that in his ministering to the church at Ephesus he had not coveted their silver or gold or apparel, but instead had labored with his own hands, and had thus in all things *set before them an example of how they also as elders (presbyters) and overseers (bishops, episcopos)* ought to help the weak and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

The Apostle could point thus to himself as an example of a proper servant of the church, because he had so closely followed the example of the great head, Jesus. It is blessed to receive, but still more blessed to give. God himself is the great Giver, continually bestowing favors upon us, and not upon the good only, but also upon the evil—even providing

a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. These words of our Lord ("It is more blessed to give than to receive") are not recorded in any of the Gospels. Dr. Philip Schaff tells us that "outside the inspired memories of the Gospels we possess the record of some twenty sayings of Jesus which have floated down to us." This quotation by the Apostle Paul is one of these, of whose authenticity we can have no doubt; and surely it is in full accord with our dear Redeemer's conduct. He emulated the Father in that he continually gave, gave, gave to others. He did not selfishly see how much comfort and ease and honor he could secure for himself, but made himself of no reputation, for our sake, daily giving his life for the assistance of others in matters, temporal, as well as spiritual, until finally he completed the sacrifice at Calvary, having given on our behalf all that he had.

If all the elders of the church of Christ could thoroughly take to heart these noble examples of Jesus and of Paul, and could become so thoroughly enthused with the Gospel message and with the privilege of being coworkers with God that they would entirely forget themselves, it would be a great blessing for them, as well as for the various little companies of the Lord's people over whom, in the Lord's providence, the holy spirit has made them overseers, to watch out for the interests of the flock and to feed them. We are not meaning to say that there are no earnest brethren today. Quite to the contrary. But we do mean to say that it is well for us to lay to heart the Apostle's earnest exhortation, that we all may be more and more faithful, more and more copies of God's dear Son, more and more like the great Apostle as regards self-sacrificing devotion to the interests of Zion.

At the close of the conference, when we may suppose the sailing of the vessel was announced, the Apostle knelt with the brethren from Ephesus, in prayer, the tenor of which may well be imagined. Then the parting took place, and doubtless the dear brethren began to realize more fully than they had ever done before what great blessings God had bestowed upon them through the Apostle's ministries, and the thought that they should never see him again filled them with sadness, and they wept as they accompanied him to the ship.

Doubtless the Apostle consoled them with the reflection that the time of partings would soon be over and the blessed eternity of union and fellowship soon begin, when they would meet not only one another, but above all meet the Redeemer himself and all the faithful in Christ Jesus. So our Lord also expressed himself on this matter, "a little while." The eighteen centuries intervening would have seemed a long while had any lived from then till now,—but since their "sleep" would be an unconscious interval, it was well that God kindly veiled their eyes and merely comforted them from his own larger standpoint of "soon," "quickly," "a little while." But now that the kingdom is nigh, even at the door, our hearts no longer cry, How long, O Lord? but, Hallelujah! the day star is risen—the morning is here!

"YOUR LABOR IS NOT IN VAIN"

1 COR. 15:20, 21. 50-58.—APRIL 12.

"Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept."

Very appropriate to its date, this is a lesson on the resurrection. There are few features of truth on which Christian people in general seem to have greater need for Bible study than that of the resurrection. There are many systems of religion in the world, but none but Christianity teaches a resurrection of the *dead*. We mean true Christianity—the Bible teaching; for alas! with deep regret we write it, churchianity does not believe in the resurrection of the *dead*: it has adopted the heathen theory that the dead are not dead, but alive; hence, whatever resurrection it teaches is along that line—of a resurrection of the *living*. Its claim is that at death something leaves the body (although they have not the slightest evidence of such departure, except that breath and vitality leave it); they claim that dying is a release, a benefit, an advantage; an unprisoning of the one who appeared to die, but who, they claim, is really more alive than ever. However, finding the doctrine of resurrection in the Bible, they do not wish to ignore it entirely and, hence teach that its beneficiaries, whom we will call "*shades*" or "*ghosts*" have hankerings after their bodies—which continue persistently after centuries of experience without bodies—although they perhaps had only a few years' experience in bodies. This hankering for a body (which they claim is unnecessary to existence and happiness) God proposes to gratify, and by and by the resurrection of the bodies will take place. They anticipate a grand, glorious time in getting back into bodies which they describe much

after the manner of present bodies, which they say are "prison-houses." Surely there is inconsistency enough in such a theory to nauseate almost anybody, and it is not surprising that great confusion prevails throughout Christendom on this subject which, as we shall see in examining our present lesson, finds so prominent a place in the Scriptures.

The Scripture teaching is most explicitly to the contrary of the above, but seems obscure, because of certain doctrinal errors which the great Adversary has introduced. One of these is a confusion of thought respecting what constitutes a soul. Churchianity's view of a soul was expressed by a Methodist bishop in these words: "It is without interior or exterior; without body, shape or parts—and you could put a million of them in a nutshell." The bishop's definition of a soul would be a proper definition of *nothing*, and one could just as readily put ten thousand millions of nothings in a nutshell,—and have room left. In the Bible, the word "soul" is used to signify being, or person; and a human being, or human person, is made up of two parts; viz., a body and its vitality otherwise called the spirit of life, or breath of life. The body is not intelligent of itself, neither is vitality intelligent; but when the two are brought together, intelligence, being, or soul, commences. So it was with Father Adam: the Lord formed his body, but it was not a soul,—it was merely so much organized matter in good form. Next God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of lives"—the vital-

ity common to all living creatures, but not a soul. It was when these two things, *organism* and *vitality*, were properly united that man came into existence, a living, thinking being—"man became,—a living soul." (Gen. 2:7) We must notice carefully that the lesson is not that man *has* a soul, but that man *is* a soul, or being.

Let us take an illustration from nature—the air we breathe: it is composed of oxygen and nitrogen, neither of which is atmosphere, or air; but when the two combine, as they do in proper chemical proportions, the resulting thing is atmosphere. Just so with the soul. God speaks to us from this standpoint, of our being each a soul. He does not address our bodies nor our breath of lives, but he does address *us* as intelligent beings, or souls. In pronouncing the penalty of violating his law, he did not address Adam's body specifically, but the man, the soul, the intelligent being: "Thou!" "In the day that *thou* eatest thereof *thou* shalt surely die." "The *soul* that sinneth it shall die."—Gen. 2:17; Ezek. 18:20.

When we perceive, then, that it is the soul that dies, we perceive also that it is the soul that will need the resurrection from death. Death is the dissolution of the union between *organism* and *vitality*, whether it be in man or in beast, in fish or in fowl. Scientists agree that a general repair of the tissues of our bodies is continually in progress; some elements constantly sloughing off, and new ones as constantly being added; they assert that this process renews the body every seven years. If, therefore, God had pronounced the death sentence merely against Adam's *body*, it would have been paid within seven years. But the penalty was not against Adam's body, but against Adam himself, the soul, the *ego*, the being, and hence, the sloughing off of the atoms of his body did not pay the penalty. It required the sacrifice of another *soul* to redeem him. Hence, we read that our Lord Jesus made "his *soul* [being] an offering for sin;" that he "poured out his *soul* unto death."—Isa. 53:10, 12.

The Apostle Peter points out that the soul of our Lord Jesus was not left in death—in *hades*—and he quotes from the Prophet David in corroboration. David declares, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in *sheol* [Greek, *hades*—the death-state]." The Apostle explains that David was a prophet, and spoke, not of himself, but of the Lord Jesus, that "his *soul* was not left in *hades*." (Acts 2:25-32) This constituted the Apostle Peter's argument regarding the resurrection of our Lord—that his *soul* was not left in *hades*—in the death-state; that God raised him up by his own power. And this is the proper thought respecting all death and all resurrection from death. It is the *soul* that dies—the being is dissolved by death. Then the body, subject to corruption, returns to dust. If it was our Lord's soul that died and was raised, and if he gave himself a ransom, a corresponding price, for soul-Adam (and his race in his loins at the time of his transgression) the thought now must be that all the souls of Adam's race are to be recovered from that death penalty;—and that the resurrection is for the purpose of restoring these souls of Adam's race, who have been bought back from destruction by the soul of the Redeemer.

Let us now look at the words of our lesson, and see that they are in full accord with what we have here set forth to be the Scriptural teaching. Vs. 20 mentions the dead as asleep, and declares that Christ was the first one to experience a resurrection from death. Let us note these two points: (1) In what sense is death a sleep? We answer that really, actually, death is an extinction of the soul; but that God, having purposed our redemption from before the foundation of the world, purposed also, as a result of that redemption, the calling of us back to being again in his own due time, by a resurrection of the dead: as it is written, "Thou *redeemest* my life from *destruction*." (Psa. 103:4; 34:22) In view of this the Lord speaks of death as a sleep, and his people are similarly justified in using this term "sleep." Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the prophets, and the kings, good and bad, are all declared to have "fallen asleep," "slept with their fathers," etc.

The New Testament records our Lord's words respecting the maid whom he called back from death: he said of her, "The maid is not dead, but *sleepeth*." So of Lazarus he declared, "Our friend Lazarus *sleepeth*," and when his disciples understood not the meaning of his words "then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead." The plain statement is death; the proper figure of death, in view of the divine purposes and promises, permits it to be called by the more comforting term, *sleep*, which expresses at the same time both our hope for the dead and our faith in God. The record of Stephen's death is that "he fell on sleep;" and the apostles, in writing to the church regarding, not only the brethren of the household of faith, but all their dear friends who go into

death, speaks of them as "them that sleep in *Jesus*," while of the church he declares that they are "dead in *Christ*." Only the members of the "body" can be said to be *in Christ*, or to have any hope of sharing with him in his resurrection. (Phil. 3:10) But, it was "the man Christ *Jesus*, who by the grace of God tasted death for *every man*," and thus, in harmony with the divine plan, turned what would have been death for every man, into a sleep from which all will awaken at Christ's second advent,—after he shall have established his kingdom. Respecting this awakening, and the place from which the dead will come forth, he says, "All that are in the grave shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth."—John 5:28.

(2) This statement that our Lord was the first-fruits of them that slept is in general accord with the testimony of the Word, "that he should be the *first* that should rise from the dead;" and also that he should be the "first-born [from the dead] among many brethren." (Acts 26:23; Rom. 8:29) Our Lord, as the head of the Church which is his body, was raised from the dead by the Father's power, on the third day after his crucifixion; but the body, the church, will not be raised up until the time of its completion, in the end of the Gospel age. When raised up it will, as his "brethren," or the members of "his body," share in "his resurrection"—his kind of a resurrection—a chief, or superior resurrection; not a resurrection in flesh and as human beings, but, as we shall see shortly, to a spirit nature, with a spirit body. Our Lord was not only the firstfruits from the dead amongst the brethren, the church, but the first to arise from the dead in every sense of the word, none having preceded him.

What, then, becomes of the theory that the dead are not dead, or that their resurrection to a higher life took place at the moment of their dying? We answer that these theories have no foundation whatever in Scripture. They are the vapors of those who have learned in the school of Plato science falsely so-called, and who have not on this subject, at least, been taught of God in the school of Christ. Mark the words of the Apostle Paul on this subject. He did not claim that our Lord arose from the dead the next instant after he expired on the cross, but plainly declared that he "rose from the dead on the *third day*." Incidentally, too, Peter refers to the prophet David, and while speaking of him in most respectful terms, as a prophet of the Lord, he declares, "David is not ascended into the heavens."—1 Cor. 15:4; Acts 2:34.

The Apostle balances this question of *life* and *death* in the 21st verse, declaring that death passed upon all by a man's transgression, and that the resurrection provision is for all, through the obedience of the man Christ Jesus,—who "poured out his *soul* unto death" on behalf of our race. There could have been no resurrection without this redemptive work, the substitution of our Lord's *soul* for the *soul* of Adam. It was a man who had sinned; and only the life of a man could meet the penalty prescribed; hence, as the Apostle says, the blood [death] of bulls and of goats could never take away sin (Heb. 10:4); and we might add that likewise the death of angels or archangels could never take away sin,—because of this divine arrangement of a life for a life, a man for a man. (Exod. 21:23-5; Lev. 24:12, 17-22; Deut. 19:21; Matt. 5:38) Hence the necessity that our Lord should leave the glory of his spirit condition, which he had with the Father, should humble himself, and take a lower nature.—the human,—in order that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man. He gave his soul, his being, all that he had as the *man* Christ Jesus—he kept nothing back—the price has been paid fully and satisfactorily.* The evidences of its satisfaction to God is doubly attested, (a) by the fact that he raised our Lord Jesus from the dead—giving him a new life,—life on a new plane of being, far above angels, and principalities and powers. (Eph. 1:20, 21) (b) It is also attested by the giving of the holy spirit at Pentecost, after our Lord had ascended up on high and had presented the merit of his sacrifice on our behalf.

Having thus established the general principle of a resurrection, and its applicability to all mankind, because the redemption was "a ransom for *all*" (1 Tim. 2:6), the Apostle proceeds to discuss particularly the first resurrection, in which the church is specially interested (he was not addressing his words to the world, but to the "sanctified in Christ Jesus."—1 Cor. 1:2) His words, found in vss. 42-44, describe, as clearly as it is possible for us to understand things so far beyond our plane of existence, the grandeurs and perfections of being which shall be ours when we shall have experienced this great change of the first resurrection: we shall no longer be weak and imperfect, with dying tendencies and with animal bodies; but shall be incorruptible, powerful, and have spiritual bodies. "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." (1

* See issue of May 1, 1916, page 133.

John 3:2) We will not discuss these verses particularly here, as they are not made a part of this lesson, and as we have treated them at length previously.

When, in the 50th verse, the Apostle declares that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, we are not to delude ourselves, as some dear Adventist friends are inclined to do,—by saying that “flesh and blood” cannot inherit the kingdom of God, but flesh and bones can. We are to recognize that the Apostle, in the use of these words, “flesh and blood,” signifies *human nature*, as when our Lord Jesus, for instance, said to Peter, “Flesh and blood [humanity] hath not revealed it unto thee.” The Apostle’s declaration thus properly understood, is that *human nature* cannot inherit the kingdom of God. This is in full accord with his own statements and the statements of other apostles, to the effect that we must become “new creatures in Christ”—“partakers of the *divine nature*,” if we would be sharers with our Lord in the coming kingdom, and its great and glorious work. Our Lord’s words to Nicodemus are in full accord with this, when he declared, “Except a man be born again [begotten now to a new nature, and born in the resurrection] he cannot enter the kingdom of God,” and cannot even see it. (John 3:3) Earthly beings of human nature, flesh and blood, can see earthly beings, but as “no man hath seen God at any time,” likewise no man can see the glorified Son of God; and for similar reasons none will be able with the natural eye to see the glorified church—for all these in their resurrection change will be spirit beings, and like their Lord, “the express image of the Father’s person.” We must keep in memory the fact that the church is entirely separate and distinct from the world; and that the hopes of the church are to be differentiated from those of the world in every particular.

“Neither doth corruption inherit incorruption;” this word “incorruption” (*aphtharsia*) is the same that is rendered “immortality” in Rom. 2:7, and in 2 Tim. 1:10. It is rendered incorruption in verses 42, 53, 54 of this chapter. The thought is that our flesh is subject to decay; but that the new body which all who participate in the first resurrection shall receive, will be an incorruptible one—one that cannot decay, that cannot die. This incorruptibility, or immortality, to be attained in their resurrection by the faithful of the Lord’s disciples of this Gospel age, is to be applicable to all who will have a share in the kingdom; and now the Apostle notices what might be a difficulty in the minds of his readers. He imagines them asking the question, How will it be with those who will be alive and remain at the time of the second coming of the Lord and the setting up of his kingdom, and the awakening of these sleeping brethren to immortality? Will the living ones pass over into the kingdom with flesh and blood and inferior bodies?

The Apostle undertakes to clear up this mystery; but although he handles his subject with lucidity the matter is not clear to the majority of the Lord’s people. We may presume that the Lord intended it to remain more or less of a “mystery” until now, in the due time for its fulfilment, it should be understood. The Apostle’s plain declaration is that “we shall not all *sleep*,” but this is misunderstood by many to mean, “We shall not all *die*.” There is a vast difference between dying and sleeping. We die in a moment, in an instant; it is the period of unconsciousness that is styled sleep, and the Apostle’s declaration, therefore, is that we shall not all pass through a period of unconsciousness, “but we shall all be changed.” It will be as impossible for the human nature, flesh and blood, of those living at the close of the Gospel age, to participate in the spiritual kingdom which Christ will then establish, as it was impossible for any of the brethren of the past to do so. How, then, will these get rid of their flesh and blood, their human nature? We answer, that the Scriptural declaration is most explicit, that all who will be partakers with Christ in “*his resurrection*,” must be sharers with him in “*his death*.” As he himself expressed it, “Be thou faithful unto *death*, and I will give thee a crown of life.” It was not sufficient that our Lord should merely consecrate himself, nor that he should merely sacrifice portions of his time and energy in the service of the truth;—it was necessary that he should complete the matter of sacrifice in literal death. And so it must be with every member of his body; as it is written, prophetically of the church, “I have said, Ye are gods, all of you children of the most High; but ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes”—not like Prince Adam, a convict, but like Prince Jesus, in sacrifice—filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.—Psa. 82:6, 7; Col. 1:24.

The change from corruptible to incorruptible, from mortal to immortal, from weakness to power, from ignominy to glory, from human nature to divine nature, in the case of these last members, will be so sudden as to occupy no appreciable space

of time, and to be illustrated only by the twinkling of an eye;—the instant of their dying will be followed the next instant by their “change.”

The thought of some, that resurrection “change” has come to each individual at the moment of dying throughout the Gospel age—that resurrection has all along followed the dying of all, is abundantly contradicted again, when the Apostle definitely fixes the time of the first resurrection of the church, the body of Christ, to be “at the last trump”—when the seventh trumpet shall sound—then “the dead [in Christ,—his members] shall be raised incorruptible, and we [of them then living] shall be changed; for this corruptible *must* put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality”—there can be no doubt that the present bodies would be wholly out of place in, and unpermissible,—impossible, to the kingdom.

After this change of the church has been completed—after this first [or chief] resurrection has been accomplished—“Then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” Here again the Apostle’s statement is generally misunderstood: most readers get the impression that he means that the victory over death and the grave is already accomplished; and a few nearer the truth infer that the “victory” will be fully accomplished in the “change” of the church, the body of Christ, in the first resurrection. However, neither of these views meets the scope of the statement. On the contrary, the first resurrection, the “change” of the church, will be but the *beginning* of the great victory which Christ is to achieve over death and the grave. This will be merely the bringing forth of the “first-fruits,” as the Apostle declares: “A kind of *firstfruits* unto God of his creatures.” (James 1:18) This is the force of the Apostle’s expression, “Then shall be brought to pass;”—that is to say, *then* this prophecy of victory over death will begin to have its fulfilment. It will require all of the Millennium to accomplish the victory over death; and Christ and the glorified church will be the victors, as it is written (vss. 25, 26). “He must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet; the *last enemy* that shall be destroyed is death.” To accomplish this complete victory over death and the grave will be the very object of the establishment of the kingdom, and will require a thousand years; as it is written again, respecting the reign of those who have part in the first resurrection, “They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”—Rev. 20:4.

This first resurrection glorifies the kingdom class; and forthwith the kingdom will be set up—“The mountain [kingdom] of the Lord’s house” will be established in the earth. This agrees with the statement of the prophet, from which the Apostle quotes, “In this mountain [Millennial kingdom] shall the Lord of hosts make unto the people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined; and he will *destroy in this mountain* [kingdom] the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces, and the rebuke of his people he take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it.” (Isa. 2:2; 25:6-8) How much of the beauty and fulness of the divine Word has been hidden from our eyes by reason of the errors introduced into the creeds of Christendom by the great adversary for this very purpose!

The Apostle, glancing down to the grand culmination at the close of the Millennium, exclaims with poetic fervor (vs. 55), “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” The thought is: Death has been stinging our race, blighting it for six thousand years, and sending it ignominiously to the tomb; but God, who justly condemned us as a race, has looked down in compassion, and beheld our impotence, and has provided a Savior and a great one—Jesus, the head, his only begotten One, our Redeemer, and the church, his body, whose kingdom shall destroy, at one and the same time, death and the grave, and their power over all who will obey the requirements of the kingdom—completely delivering such from their power. Adamic death is to be utterly destroyed—not a soul of Adam’s posterity is to be left therein,—for those who will not accept the grace of God when offered to them will be destroyed utterly, not for Adam’s transgression, but for their own transgression,—not, therefore, by Adamic death, but by second death.—Ezek. 18:2-4, 20.

This utter destruction on account of personal, wilful sin is Scripturally known as the second death, which is nowhere denominated an enemy. On the contrary, it is the friend of God,—his servant, to “destroy those who [would] corrupt the earth.” It is the friend of all who love righteousness, and desire peace, joy, blessing, in harmony with the divine will. It is not even the enemy of those whom it will destroy—the wicked—because it is better that they should be destroyed

than that they should be permitted to institute another reign of sin and death out of harmony with the Lord's righteous arrangements. It is Adamic death that our Lord Jesus will destroy; and it is denominated an enemy because it came upon Adam's posterity contrary to their wills, and because some, at least, of the thousands of millions under its control, are disposed to be perfect and righteous, and are hindered by the weaknesses and restraints imposed by the great enemy in whose clutches they were born. It will be the "last enemy" to be destroyed, because other evils will be brought into subjection early in the Millennium; but men will get the victory over death only in proportion as they obey the voice of the great Teacher, Priest and King, and gradually rise, inch by inch, through restitution processes, up, up, up, out of death, until finally, at the close of the Millennial age, they shall reach life in its full, perfect degree. When all shall have become thus released from death to life, or else transferred to the second death,—then this enemy, death,—Adamic death,—will have been vanquished; its victory over all who long for righteousness and life eternal will be at an end.

"HELL" IN THE REVISED VERSION

It will be noticed that the translators of the Revised Version have usually avoided the use of the word "hell" throughout the Scriptures, substituting therefor in the Old Testament the Hebrew word "*sheol*," and in the New Testament the Greek word, "*hades*." Evidently, in view of the meaning attaching to the word "hell" the translators could not conscientiously so render *sheol* and *hades* and, therefore, avoided any translation;—not wishing to translate these words "grave," for fear, perhaps, that the public should quickly see that they had been hoodwinked on this subject for many years. We much prefer not to think ungenerously of men of such great scholarship but circumstances certainly point in this direction. One of these pointers is found in vs. 55, where, instead of translating *hades* "grave," as in the old version, or leaving it untranslated, *hades*, as in most other places in the Revised Version, they have translated it "death."

What was the object of this deviation from the general usage? We can only surmise that it was to help keep the public in the dark respecting the true sentiments of the Word of God. Had they rendered the sentence, "O *hades*, where is thy victory?" it would have given some, doubtless, the thought that *hades*, whatever it is (hot place of torture, or the cold grave), would finally yield to this triumph of the Lord Jesus, which will begin as soon as his church shall be "changed" and his kingdom established.

The Apostle continues his argument and shows that the victory will not be completely brought to pass until the end of the Millennium. He declares that the sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is in the law. Under Christ's Millennial kingdom the sins of the past will be forgiven, because of the atonement accomplished; and the perfect law of God, having been met by the Mediator, will be applied to the ransomed race only in such proportions as they can receive it—in proportion to their knowledge and ability to obey. Thus the Mediator of the New Covenant will ultimately bring off conquerors all who will obey him.

THE CHURCH'S PRESENT VICTORY

The Apostle next turns back the line of his argument from the future time, when men will be actually lifted up out of sin and death and imperfection, to the present time in which this is *reckonedly* accomplished for the church, the body of Christ, through faith. His words are, "But thanks be to God, which giveth us [now] the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Although as yet we see none of these things accomplished; although we have not our spiritual bodies, incorruptible and powerful; although we still have the treasure of the new mind in the earthen vessel; although we see nothing of the kingdom's establishment;—nevertheless, God giveth us victory through Christ, by faith; so that even now we can "rejoice with joy unspeakable," and can so confidently look forward into the future as to claim a share in the victory over sin and death and the grave, through him who loved us and bought us.

The closing argument is that on this account—because we see these things so clearly with the eye of faith, we should be "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labor is not in vain in the Lord;"—realizing that it is God who is working out this great plan of salvation, through our Lord Jesus Christ, and supporting all those who are seeking to walk in his steps, and to come off conquerors through him. Death and the grave may still seem to be gaining victories over us. But faith sees the matter from the other side, from the standpoint of accomplished victory in the future; and even now it exults and rejoices in the privilege of collaborating with the Redeemer, and realizes that time and energy and life so spent are spent "not in vain," because we confidently hope for, expect and wait for the glorious first resurrection "change" and the glorious privileges of association with our Master in his kingdom and work.

INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED

HOW SHALL WE VIEW SUICIDE?

Question.—How shall we view suicide? How serious is this matter? Should it be considered a crime?

Answer.—Suicide should be considered a very serious crime, unless it be the act of a deranged mind whose responsibility in the sight of God and men would, thereby, be considerably lessened.

Since the greatest gift of God is eternal life, through Christ, we may reason that life in any measure is an inestimable boon, privilege. For any sane mind, enlightened by present truth, to contemplate suicide would be unthinkable. We, above all others, realize the value of the present life: we see through it a special opportunity for the development of character along the lines of divine instruction. We see that the development of such character is essential to a share in any part in our heavenly Father's plan; we see, then, that whatever would prematurely take away our life privileges would be that much working against us, and our highest and best interests. We have faith to believe that our heavenly Father will even protect our lives so that nothing could happen to cut them off up to that point where we shall have had the full privilege and opportunity of character-development—making our calling and election sure. Any attempt on our part to cut short our own privileges would mean not only a rebellion against the divine will, but a folly as regards our own interests, incomprehensible, as we have just said, except under some mental delusion.

The Lord's people, especially in the light of present truth, should be overwhelmed with the privilege of living at such a time as this, as well as with the privilege granted to us of making our calling and our election sure to a share in the kingdom honors. There is no antidote for despondency so good as the medicine of the Lord's Word—its assurance that our Savior loved us so as to purchase us with his own blood, and

his assurance, in turn, that "the Father himself loved us," and the additional assurance that "all things shall work together for good to us because we love God and have been called according to his purpose." "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself," and has with the hope a ground for joy and peace and trust and contentment which the world can neither give nor take away. Alas, poor world! We wonder that more of its number, without God, without hope, without intelligent knowledge of the divine plan working out blessing for the groaning creation, should not be tempted to do away with the present life—seeing in it no special value, no special blessing, no special opportunities, such as we see and enjoy and hope to realize.

"WHO IS BLIND, BUT MY SERVANT?"

Question.—To what or whom does Isa. 42:19-21 refer? Is it applicable to our Lord Jesus?

Answer.—This Scripture seems to apply to our Lord Jesus, and incidentally to the church which is his body. These are to be blind to some things—blind to earthly ambitions and prospects and worldly wisdom, to the intent that they may the more diligently render obedience to their high calling which leads them to ignore present advantages,—to sacrifice them all, laying down even life itself in the service of the truth. It is not the blindness of ignorance, as is indicated by verse 20. "Seeing many things ["but" omitted], thou observest not [heeded not; it is not that we do not see earthly advantages, but we purposely reject, close our eyes, to all such earthly allurements.]" The word "perfect" in v. 19 has the significance of surrendered or devoted. With this blindness Jehovah is well pleased; he accepts it as the atonement sacrifice, and thereby his law is proven to be reasonable, possible to be kept by a perfect man; yea, indeed, it is multiplied and shown to have a still higher and deeper scope than was ever previously comprehended.