



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" Isaiah 21:11

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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. And the Lord said unto me, "Write down the vision, and make it plain upon tablets, that every one may read it fluently." Hab. 2:1, 2.

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 forward to the things coming upon the earth (society); for the powers of the heavens (ecclesiasticism) shall be shaken. . . . When ye see these things come to pass, then know that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Look up, lift up your heads, rejoice, for your redemption draweth nigh.—Luke 21:25-28-31.

THIS JOURNAL. AND ITS MISSION

THIS journal is set for the defence 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 Pet. 1:19; 1 Tim. 2:6). Building up on this sure foundation the gold, silver and precious stones (1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Pet. 1:5-11) of the Word of God, its further 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."—Eph. 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. Its attitude is not dogmatical, 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 this Temple, through which, when finished, God's blessings shall come "to all people," and they find access to him.—1 Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 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.—Rev. 15:5-8.

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."—Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6.

That the Hope of the Church is that she may be like her Lord. "see him as he is." be "partaker of the divine nature," and share his glory as his joint-heir.—1 John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; 2 Pet. 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 the kings and priests of the next age.—Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 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; Isa. 35.

CHARLES T. RUSSELL, Editor.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

—ADDRESS TO—

WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY

"BIBLE HOUSE," 610, 612, 614 ARCH ST., ALLEGHENY, PA., U. S. A.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE, \$1.00 A YEAR IN ADVANCE

MONEY MAY BE SENT BY EXPRESS, N. Y. DRAFT, MONEY ORDER, OR REGISTERED FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES BY FOREIGN MONEY ORDERS, ONLY. SPECIAL TERMS TO THE LORD'S POOR, AS FOLLOWS:—

Those of the *interested* who, by reason of old age, or other infirmity or adversity, are unable to pay for the Tower will be supplied FREE, if they send a Postal Card each December, stating their case and requesting the paper. We are not only willing, but anxious, that all such be on our list continually.

ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MAIL MATTER AT ALLEGHENY, PA., POST OFFICE

BRITISH BRANCH NO. 131 GIPSY LANE, FOREST GATE
LONDON EAST, ENGLAND

PLEASE ACCEPT OUR THANKS FOR YOUR KIND LETTERS

It rejoices us greatly to hear from so many of you. We received 1856 letters and cards during the last week of 1900. Please accept WATCH TOWER articles as our replies. We send postal card or letter receipts for all *Money Orders*, etc., received: so if you do not receive such acknowledgement within two weeks apply for a duplicate Money Order and repeat letter-order.

A WORD ABOUT CREDITS

We are quite willing to give reasonable credits on our own publications, but cannot do this on other books—Bibles, etc. Please therefore do not order the latter until you can send the money. We supply Bibles at cost, merely for your accommodation, and we must pay cash to secure them at low rates.

NO DATE TAGS ON TOWER WRAPPERS

Last year we adopted a new method of addressing the WATCH TOWERS which does not show date when subscription expires. Instead we now send a *postal card receipt* at once on receipt of the money.

ABOUT RENEWING YOUR Z. W. T. SUBSCRIPTION

We want all *interested* in "present truth" on our lists, that thus they may share with us the spiritual food now being dispensed by our present Lord. We do not *urge* you to renew, tho we will be glad to have you continue with us: all we feel it proper to do is to make our *terms so reasonable* as to leave no valid excuse for any to go without this spiritual food if he has an appetite for it. If you cannot conveniently send the cash you may have it on credit, and should you never be able to pay you can have the debt canceled upon request.

ABOUT "PILGRIM" CALLS

We find to our joy that the Pilgrim visits are greatly enjoyed by the friends of the truth:—the limited responses to our previous notice being the result of misunderstandings. Some presumed that our inquiry was for places where a "Pilgrim" had never yet stopped and who desired one. Others thought we meant to send the "Pilgrim" at once and direct from Allegheny, and thought the distance and expense too great to ask. Now they understand that our method is to make out *routes* in advance and that we wanted to know where the "Pilgrim" visits are most appreciated in order to specially include such places in those routes. We have many responses. Some are from very remote places not likely ever to be reached: and yet some have already been reached of which at first we had the same thought. We will do our best to serve all.

ALLEGHENY CHURCH MEETINGS

Preaching and divine worship every Sunday afternoon in Bible House chapel, No. 610 Arch street, at 3 P. M.

Cottage meetings for prayer and testimony on Wednesday evenings; and Dawn Circles for Bible Study on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings—various localities, Pittsburg and vicinity—inquire at WATCH TOWER office.

DO YOU INVITE A CONTINUANCE OF THE WATCH TOWER VISITS?

Samples of the WATCH TOWER are sometimes sent unintentionally to those who do not welcome them; but we certainly do not wish to intrude it regularly upon anyone. Hence we desire some expression from every one on our lists once each year: either the subscription price, or a request for its continuance with a suggestion as to when it will be more convenient to send the money, or a request to have it as one of the Lord's *poor*. Or, if you please, say that you dislike it and don't want to see it again.

We think it not unreasonable to ask at least a post-card expression yearly, from each one on our list. And if you will send this sometime in December it will convenience us greatly.

Do not misunderstand us: we have no desire to drop a single name—the poor who cannot pay, but who relish the spiritual food dispensed through these columns, are just as welcome to it as those who pay. Indeed they do pay: for we have a fund provided for this very purpose. Make known to all the *interested* that we *desire* their names on our lists. But they must ask for themselves—unless the person writing for them is a Tract Fund contributor, and at same time requests that these be charged to his donation—which we will be very pleased to do.

ZION'S

WATCH TOWER

And

Herald of Christ's Presence

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No. 1

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

As those living at the close of the first century, on January 1, 101, looked back upon a full hundred years called the first century, and looked forward to a full hundred years called the second century, into which they had just entered, and which would continue until Dec. 31, A. D. 200, so we, on Jan. 1, 1901, look back upon nineteen completed centuries, and look forward into the twentieth, upon which we have just entered.

Few, if any, who read these words ever saw a new century born, and it occurs to us that as the Lord's people, daily and weekly and yearly, turn over new leaves of experience and repeatedly start afresh in their endeavors to copy the great character-pattern set before us by our heavenly Father in Jesus, so, too, we may specially profit by the thought that a new century has dawned, to encourage ourselves in fresh resolves to be and to do more than ever as would be pleasing and acceptable in the sight of our Lord. What more appropriate sentiments could we have than these! How could we hope better to please him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, him who has lifted our feet out of the horrible pit and the miry clay, and set them upon the rock Christ Jesus, and established our goings, and shown unto us the path of life, and made us full of joy with the light of his countenance! The Lord's own expression on the subject is, "If ye love me keep my commandments;" and the Apostle, in the same strain, assures us that we are acceptable children of God if we do those things which please him, and do not find them grievous—if we do them gladly and of a willing heart—rejoicing both to know and to do the good pleasure of our God.

SALUTATIONS, GREETINGS AND GOOD WISHES

We salute with Christian love and recognition all who trust in the precious blood of Jesus, justified by faith in his blood, and reckoned as members of the household of faith the world over—known to us and unknown to us. And even beyond these, we salute with loving sympathy those who yet in darkness are feeling after God, if haply they might find him (Acts 17:27)—who are seeking peace and righteousness, the ways of the Lord. Our best wish for these is that they may find the Lord, and obtain through his grace the peace of God which passeth all understanding, to rule in their hearts and to shed abroad in them the light of the knowledge of his goodness as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord.—1 Cor. 4:4.

But especially we salute and greet the brethren in Christ, members of the royal priesthood, heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord prospectively;—all those who, having believed in the Redeemer to the remission of their sins and their justification before God, have taken the next step of presenting their bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, and their reasonable service. We know and are in communication with a goodly number of these dear "brethren" (Heb. 2:11); yet we doubt not there are many others to whom we are as yet strangers; whom not having known we nevertheless love, knowing well that all who have this spirit of the Head of the church must be indeed members of his Body, and therefore fellow members with ourselves. We wish all such great blessing during the year beginning, and as it is now the harvest-time, in which the great Chief Reaper is gathering together into one barn of safety all the true wheat—as it is now the time when the messengers are gathering together the elect from the four quarters of the heavens (the nominal

church) it is our hope that many of these dear brethren may be gathered during this year.—Matt. 24:31; 13:30.

Not gathered into another denomination, with merely a change of name or change of creed or change of form of worship, but gathered to Christ, into oneness with him, in fellowship of spirit through the knowledge of his Word. And we are to expect this gathering to progress more and more, because two influences are at work, both calculated to effect the separation of these brethren from Babylon. (1) The increasing deflection of the nominal church people from the true standard of religion which God has provided, the Bible, into various subversive unbeliefs; *viz.*, into Higher Criticism infidelity, Evolution infidelity, Christian Science infidelity, etc., etc. The further and the more rapidly these leave the Word of God, the greater will be the influence upon the Israelites indeed, who are in heart-union with the Lord, and full of faith in his Word; for they will perceive more and more clearly what they have endeavored heretofore to ignore; *viz.*, that we are in the great day of trial of which the Apostle wrote: "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."—1 Cor. 3:13.

We are in this day of trial, have been in it for over twenty years, and each day brings us nearer to the culmination of testing, and tends to separate more and more widely between those who are really God's people begotten of the holy Spirit, and those who are merely nominal and outwardly his, naming the name of Christ, and drawing nigh with their lips, but in heart are out of sympathy with him and his Word of righteousness.

(2) As this true class is being thus forced out of sympathy with Babylon and the masses of all denominations, they are hungering and thirsting after righteousness—desiring the spiritual food, which the Lord has been meantime preparing for them, and which now, by his grace, is indeed "meat in due season" to all who belong to the true household of faith. Such, having been considerably weaned from the spirit of Babylon, will frequently be found in just that attitude of heart and mind in which the truth will appeal to them quickly and thoroughly, and sometimes accomplish as much in one year as was accomplished with others at an earlier period in several years of study and development.

For these reasons we are expecting great things in the way of progress of the truth in the near future. We believe it the duty, as well as the pleasure, of all who have been enlightened of God through the harvest message, to spread the good tidings abroad,—to hand out to famishing brethren the meat in due season which has so strengthened our own hearts. And this seems to be more and more the Spirit of the Lord's brethren, as they receive of the Lord's grace and truth and become more and more copies of God's dear Son, and have more and more of his spirit of willingness to serve the brethren and as the Apostle suggests are willing to lay down their lives for the brethren (1 John 3:16)—not literally, but day by day and opportunity by opportunity—willing to sacrifice the comforts and advantages which, to the natural man, go to make up the sum of earthly life and happiness. They take pleasure in renouncing earthly privileges and luxuries, and even some of life's comforts, that they may spend the

more of their substance and be the more spent themselves in doing good unto all men, especially to the household of faith, and especially in the higher spiritual good things which they have the inestimable privilege of dispensing as servants of our present Lord.—Matt. 24:45.

And since this commendable spirit seems to be growing amongst the dear friends of the truth, everywhere, we may reasonably expect that the coming year will be one of still greater activities and still greater successes in the dispensing of the truth and the bringing of brethren out of darkness into the marvelous light, now shining for all who are the Lord's people. Just how this will be accomplished we do not yet see clearly, but we are encouraged by fresh proposals for the colporteur work and an increasing interest in the volunteer work both at home and abroad. If all of the deeply interested will join us in praying the Lord of the harvest to send forth more laborers into the harvest work, we may expect, as one result, that all who thus pray will themselves be granted fresh and larger opportunities of service.

As we consider it not to be the Lord's will that we should beg for money, but merely that we should use as wisely as possible whatever he shall supply, so we feel that it would not be the Lord's will that we should press or urge upon any the matter of service to his cause. We merely call attention to the opportunities for service and the privileges connected with these, and to the advantages and blessings which accrue to those who embrace them. We can, however, speak confidently of a fact that experience has demonstrated, and to which many of our readers could testify, *viz.*, that the Lord specially blesses those who, having received the light of truth, do not put it under a bushel, but let it shine, fearlessly and wisely, to all the household of faith. Many letters indicate that great blessing was received and spiritual progress made during the past year; and these came chiefly from those who have engaged in the volunteer work—preaching the present truth Sunday after Sunday, to those professing to be children of God, by distributing to them literature as they returned home from their churches. So great has been the blessing upon many of these volunteers that they have written to us urging that some kind of literature may be prepared so that they may engage in similar service during the year 1901. One dear sister, who was at first deterred by criticism (from one who should have helped instead of hindered her), declares that nothing she ever did in the Lord's service was so heavy a "cross" at first; but that having taken it up as a service to the Lord and his "brethren" she had received from it more blessing than from any other service ever performed. She and associates have thoroughly distributed the "volunteer" TOWER to the Protestant church attendants of their city and even surrounding towns, and like true soldiers of the cross are waiting and calling for more of the love-and-truth ammunition which, under God's blessing, routing the powers of darkness, from some hearts at least, will deliver "brethren" and bring them into the clear sunlight of grace and truth.

In compliance with these requests and suggestions, and with the belief that this is one of the best ways of reaching the professed "household of faith" with the meat in due season, we are preparing for another campaign in this holy war against the enslaving errors which hold so many of our dear brethren captive,—human traditions which both dishonor God and stultify those who in any degree give them allegiance.

We are not seeking to have any engage in this work who do not love the truth, and desire at heart to serve it; for we believe that such service would not be very acceptable to our Lord, the Chief Reaper. But we do seek to encourage all those who have a heart's desire to serve our King, and who know of no better way of engaging in his service, and who have thus far been deterred, and have missed the blessing which goes with it, through fear of man, which bringeth a snare—through shame for the cross and the true Gospel, which are not popular now. We want to assure such that this will be a part of their "overcoming" which will probably help them more than anything else they have ever done to become strong in the Lord and in the power of his might as overcomers of their own weaknesses. It will assist them in making their calling and their election sure, by assisting them in the development of the character of overcomers, to whom the Lord has promised the crown of glory and the heavenly blessings.—Rev. 2:26-29.

All who volunteer in this service during the coming year will be supplied with a booklet, entitled, "Food for Thinking Christians; Our Lord's Return, etc.," a neat, attractive little pamphlet, which, we trust, will feed many hungry brethren and sisters in Babylon, and thus give them strength to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. But whether we shall find many hungry ones, and learn of their refreshment with the

truth or not, we are sure that those who dispense this food will have the Master's blessing, and that they themselves will become strong by the exercise of their wills, and the bringing of their bodies into subjection in service and sacrifice to the Lord and his cause. And loving you all, and realizing that such a service will be the greatest blessing to you all, we are desirous for this reason alone that so many as wish this service may have the opportunity, and may be encouraged to engage in it; but we are confident that good will be accomplished also for some yet bound in Babylon;—that God will use this means for calling them out.—Rev. 18:4.

We are not urging this as instead of other means of work, as for instance, the colporteur work, and the endeavor to interest friends through special tracts suited to their conditions, etc., etc. What we are suggesting is in addition to the other things. It is a method of preaching the Gospel—the true Gospel, of which no reasonable person need be ashamed. It appeals to all who know of no other way of preaching more likely to be effective in finding and assisting the brethren. While, therefore, we pray the Lord of the harvest for laborers in the vineyard in the colporteur branch of the service, still, we remember that not all of the royal priesthood are so circumstanced in life as to be able to offer their sacrifices in this form. We thank the Lord, therefore, for the opportunity for their engagement in this preaching of the true Gospel through the printed page to church people; and we rejoice especially that in this service almost all of the royal priesthood can find opportunities for self-sacrifice, following closely in the footsteps of Jesus, and rejoicing proportionately as they follow; and proportionately growing stronger in the Lord and in the power of his might, and being made "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

Samples of the new literature mentioned will be sent to each one on our lists, as No. 52 of the OLD THEOLOGY series. We trust it will please you both in contents and in appearance; and we believe that it will be attractive to others who may through its perusal be led to "choose the better part," and to be taught of God, and refreshed in heart by the glorious things he is now dispensing to his faithful. We offer the suggestion therefore, that in every little group of the Lord's people meeting for the study of his Word, this volunteer service be taken up and discussed; and that those who have not yet entered the work shall seek to do so (that they may have a part of the blessing), "while it is called day, for the night cometh wherein no man can work." Appoint one of your number as the captain, and let him bring to his assistance as many lieutenants as he may please to counsel and assist in the division of the work, the appointment of distributors, etc., that the work may be done systematically and thoroughly.

Those who are without companionship and assistance in this work may engage in it, and we will be pleased to hear from them also; but let each little circle, so far as possible, act in harmony in the matter, not all attempting to be directors, but each willing to submit to the will of the majority and to act through whomsoever the majority may appoint the captain of the group. The responsibility falling upon one will be much more likely to be well discharged than if divided amongst many. Those who engaged in the work last year and the year before no doubt have memoranda which will be valuable to them in judging of the quantities of pamphlets needful for this work the coming year. We will be pleased to supply printed blanks useful in the guiding of the various distributors to the places of service to which their captains may appoint them week after week. We are pleased to hear from these captains at the close of each campaign, respecting the number of churches served, the average attendance, etc., and especially respecting any evidences of blessing, either amongst the distributors or on the part of those who receive the literature.

THE SPIRITUAL HEALTH OF THE LORD'S FLOCK

Through our correspondence with the dear friends of the cause throughout the world we, so to speak, have our finger upon their spiritual pulse, and we are glad to inform you all that the indications are that the spiritual condition is good—better than ever before. During the past few years we were impressed with the thought that some of the dear readers of this journal had received more knowledge than they were making use of in their daily lives—that some of them were more interested in the letter of the truth, in the knowledge of God's plan, than in conforming their lives to the Spirit of the truth. In harmony with this conviction we have sought, during the last three years especially, to draw attention to

the necessity for receiving not the grace of God in vain, but on the contrary permitting the truth which we so dearly love to work in our hearts both to will right and, so far as possible, to do right—God's good pleasure respecting us.—Phil. 2:13.

Apparently the Lord has blessed these efforts, as no doubt he guided and led toward them. To him we gladly render the praise for the evidences we see through your correspondence that you are appreciating more and more not only the heavenly prize, but also the trials and difficulties which, under divine providence, are intended to develop our characters, and make us copies of our Lord, and thus to prepare us for the kingdom and for the great privileges and work of blessing others through it. It is our desire, and we believe yours also, to still progress in this "narrow way" of self-sacrifice; to still recognize the Lord's hand in all of life's affairs toward "the called ones according to his purpose;" and the advantage of every trial and discipline rightly received; and to still be helpful to all who are in the way, assisting them to put on the armor of God, and to be clothed with all the graces of the spirit, and to be shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, that they may tread faithfully this royal way opened up by our Redeemer, walking in his footsteps,

until the heavenly kingdom shall have been attained.

We do not mean to say that there are no drawbacks, no difficulties, no discouragements, in any part of the field. Quite to the contrary, there are many such; but these also, interpreted in the light of the divine Word, are encouragements to us, since we know that they are needful. We realize that the Lord himself is pruning his "vine," taking away the branches that will not bear fruit, and that unto perfection, fully ripe. When we say, therefore, that the outlook is encouraging, we mean the broad view of the harvest-field, rather than every little microscopic view of a particular point in it.

We have learned, too, that sometimes matters which seem to be dark clouds and troubles amongst the brethren are really, under divine providence, messengers of blessing, which, rightly received, do good in showing the brethren their own weaknesses and imperfections, and in leading them to seek more and more of the grace of God to overcome these, that they may be filled with all the fulness of God. It is along this line, then, that we congratulate you and bid you be of good courage and continue to press along the line toward the "mark" of perfect character—perfection in love: assured that if faithful we shall ultimately obtain blessings far beyond our present conceptions.

PRESSING TOWARD THE MARK

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forward to those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."—Phil. 3:13, 14.

Few in the nominal church see any particular mark or any particular prize with definiteness;—to be sought and to be attained. The majority are merely fleeing from an imagined eternal torment, which pursues them as a fear, a dread, a nightmare, a horror from the cradle to the tomb. Others of the Lord's people (chiefly of "this way") have had the eyes of their understanding illuminated by the holy spirit through the divine Word, and have gotten a glimpse of the great prize which God has set before the elect church of this Gospel age. No wonder if these are enthused with the glorious spectacle which (the natural) eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man to conceive of, but which "God hath revealed unto us by his spirit!" No wonder, either, if they have given more attention to the prize than to the mark which must be attained ere the prize is won.

Full of enthusiasm and appreciation of divine love, these have entirely lost the fear of eternal torment, and have learned that this doctrine is of Satan, and not of God, from man, and not of the holy Spirit; from the dark ages, and not the teachings of the inspired words of Scripture. They have learned, too, that what scriptures seem to give any color of sanction to this blasphemy against God's character and plan are certain parables, symbols and dark sayings which misinterpretations have more or less glossed and colored in the common translations of the Scriptures.

It is quite common for this latter class to think and to speak of "running for the prize," and to measurably lose sight of the fact that it is not the prize that we run toward, but the *mark*: that the prize is entirely beyond our grasp;—as the Apostle expresses it above, "I press toward the mark." Whoever reaches the mark of character which God has established for the elect will receive the prize; and whoever fails to reach that mark of character will fail to get the prize. It is therefore a very serious error to run for the prize and forget or ignore or disregard the "mark," which must be first attained.

The thought that a certain standard or mark of character is necessary to all who will pass divine approval as "overcomers," and hear the Lord's "Well done!" is an astounding one to many. Many have thought of the Christian race as merely an avoidance of open sin; others have included an avoidance of secret faults; others have gone still further, and have included a general disposition to sacrifice many interests of the present life; others have gone still further, and have understood the test of discipleship to be full self-surrender to the Lord, a full sacrifice of earthly life and all of its interests to the will of our Head, the Lord;—but almost none have the thought that all our sacrificings and experiences and self-denials must lead up toward and eventually bring us to the "mark" of character which God has set for the "elect,"—else they will not get the prize of joint-heirship with Christ in the Millennial kingdom. Nothing, probably,

has contributed so much to this oversight of a "mark" or fixed standard of character than the false interpretation given to our Lord's conversation with the dying thief on Calvary.*

It is indisputably reasonable, that God has some standard or test by which he will determine who are worthy to receive the great blessings and honors offered to the elect—who are worthy to be members of the body of Christ and to share his Millennial kingdom—what shall constitute *faithfulness* in those who "seek for glory, honor and immortality," and who are "the called and chosen and faithful." The Apostle, in our text, unquestionably declares that there is such a mark, and that all who are running with any hope of attaining the desired prize must be running toward that mark, and must attain it or lose the prize. And we see, too, that the Apostle judges himself according to this standard, and declares that at the time he wrote he had not yet reached this mark or standard of character-development. Such reflections cannot but awaken in the hearts of all who are in this race earnest desires to see distinctly the mark toward which we must run: and it should stimulate each and all of us to run the more patiently and the more perseveringly, and to watch day by day the measure of our progress toward the grand mark which the Lord our God has set before us.

We notice that the Apostle has in mind foot-races, and we see the forcefulness of the illustration: 1) As the racers must enter the race-course in a legitimate manner, so must we get on our race-course in a legitimate manner, through the only door—faith in the precious blood which redeemed us and justified us before God. (2) Those who enter the course must be regularly recorded or registered as runners: they must positively declare their intention, else they will not be in the race. So with us: having been "justified by faith," and having been informed of our privileges in connection with this race, and the attainment of its prize, it was incumbent upon us to declare our intention—to make a covenant with the Lord, and to thus be regularly entered—our names being written, not upon earthly church rolls, but in the Lamb's book of life—"written in heaven."—Heb. 12:23.

With foot-racers there is a prize offered also, but it is not the prize that is hung out to their view while on the race-course; it is not the prize toward which they run, but the mark. There is the quarter-mile mark, the half-mile mark, the three-quarter-mile mark, and the mile mark at the close of the race; and each racer watches for and encourages himself as he passes one or another of these marks by the way, until finally he reaches the last one, the mark for the prize. And this watching of the marks by the way, and reckoning up to the standard, is a great incentive to him—an encouragement as he speeds along, a reminder if he is going slackly. So, too, it is with the Christian runner in the narrow way *toward the mark* of the great prize which God has promised—joint-heirship with his Son, the Lord of glory.

* See our issue of June 1, 1896, "The Thief in Paradise."

It will encourage us to note the marks on our way, and to perceive our progress—if we are coming nearer and nearer and nearer to “the mark for the prize”—the mark which wins the prize. And if any be careless, indifferent, slack, in his running, nothing could be a greater stimulus to him than the knowledge that only his own carelessness or slackness can lose him the prize.

WHAT IS THIS GREAT ‘MARK’ OF CHARACTER SET BEFORE US BY OUR GOD?

We answer It is stated under various names; as for instance, our Lord Jesus mentioned it when he said, “Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.” (Matt. 5:48) The same mark is mentioned by the Apostle when he says that God predestinated that all who will be of the elect must be “conformed to the image of his Son.” (Rom. 8:29) These two statements differ in form, but are the same in substance. The same mark is mentioned again by the Apostle when he says, “The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.” And again he tells us that “Love is the fulfilling of the law.” (Rom. 8:4; 13:10) Here, then, we have an aggregated definition of what constitutes the “mark” of Christian character, in the elect: it is godliness, Christ-likeness, love. The requirement, therefore, would seem to be that the Lord’s people, holy and elect, must attain to the same character or disposition of love that God possesses and that was manifested also by our Lord Jesus.

But some one will say, How can we, “who by nature are children of wrath, even as others,” ever hope to attain to so high a standard or mark of character as this, that we should love as God loves, as Christ loves? We answer, that we need never hope to attain to this high standard as respects the flesh, for so long as we are in these mortal bodies, and obliged to use their brains, we will necessarily be more or less opposed by the selfishness which through the fall has come to have such complete possession of our race through the mental, moral and physical derangements incidental to six thousand years of depravity.

The attainment of this mark of perfect love is to be an attainment of the heart, of the will—the new will,” “begotten, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God,” through the holy Spirit. Nor do we find, nor should we expect that the new mind would come up to this standard at the beginning of our Christian experience. The new mind, altho inspired of God through the exceeding great and precious promises of his Word, is nevertheless our own will, and more or less circumscribed by its channel and instrument, the human brain. Hence the Apostle informs us that the new mind must constantly fight a battle against the flesh, and that its victory means the death of the flesh—that it cannot be actually perfect until the “change” shall come, by which this newly begotten will shall receive its spiritual body in the first resurrection. But since the receiving of a spiritual body in the first resurrection will be the receiving of the prize, we see that the race toward the mark and the attainment of that mark must be made by the new mind while it is still in this mortal body or “earthen vessel.”—2 Cor. 5:2-4.

In a word, the new mind must grow, must develop. As the Apostle exhorts, we, as new creatures, must grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of God—the growth here corresponding to the running in the figure under consideration. We must run or press nearer and nearer to the mark day by day, week by week, year by year, until it shall be attained,—if we would gain the prize. Nor is it merely a question of time, for we all know some who have been a long time in the race and have made comparatively little progress in the cultivation of the gifts of the Spirit, the sum of which is comprehended in the one word, perfect love—the mark.

And we probably all know some others who have been a comparatively short time in the narrow way who have made great progress,—going from grace to grace, from knowledge to knowledge, from glory to glory—rapidly nearing the mark. And we know some who, so far as human judgment can discern, have reached the mark; but of these more anon.

That we may clearly comprehend this subject, let us notice how small were the beginnings of this grace of love in our hearts; and let us hope that many, as they trace the matter here, and compare it with their own experiences, will be able to find large developments in their own characters—that they have passed one after another of the quarter-mile marks in the way, and that they are rapidly nearing, if they have not already reached, “the mark of the prize.”

(1) The beginning of our experience as Christians the Apostle expresses, saying, it was not that we first loved God,

but that “he first loved us”—that attracted us to him. (1 John 4:19) A sense of justice told us that since God had so loved us as to redeem us at so great a cost, and to provide for us so great salvation, it would be as little as we could do—it would be our duty to love and serve him in return. This beginning of love we will designate as *duty-love*. It lacked in many respects qualities which now permeate our love for God, which is of a higher, a more advanced character, because we have grown in grace, and in knowledge, and in love. The Apostle seems to speak again of this same duty-love, when he says, “The love of Christ *constraineth* us [draws out our love in return]; for we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead [under divine sentence, the curse]; and that we who live [who have been justified to life through faith in Jesus’ redemption] *should* henceforth live not unto ourselves but unto him who died for us.” (2 Cor. 5:14, 15) Here again it is the “*should*”—love or duty-love,—the first, the crudest, the simplest development of our love toward God, our starting-point in the race toward perfect love.

(2) After we had exercised the duty-love and sought to obey God, not only in the avoidance of sin, but also in sacrificing our earthly interests and rights for his sake and the truth’s sake, in obedience to his will—in obedience to duty-love—we began to find in our hearts an appreciation of the principles of righteousness; we began to love righteousness—justice, mercy, love: not at first with a fervency of love, but rather with respect for the glorious qualities of the divine character, plan and law. This was our first quarter-mile mark, so to speak—love of principles of righteousness.

(3) The more we learned to love these elements of divine character, the principles of righteousness which find their perfect representation in the divine being, and through which the divine being is revealed to the eyes of our understanding—in that proportion the true love of God (based upon principles rather than upon duty), comes into our hearts. So to speak, here in the race-course we had gained the second quarter-mile mark—love of God’s character; even tho we had not yet discerned the length and breadth and heights and depths of that character, we had begun to love the Lord in the true way—from appreciation not only of what he had done for us, but also and specially for what he is;—from appreciation of his character.

(4) Love of God from this latter standpoint as the representative of every grace and every virtue, as the representative of righteousness, and the opponent of every injustice and inequity, led us to seek and to follow out these principles amongst our fellow-men, as well as in our own characters. As we began to love truth, purity, nobility of character, wherever it could be found, we found some of it in a mottled and streaked condition even in the world of mankind: we found that the original law of God, written in the heart of Father Adam, altho largely erased and obliterated from the hearts and consciences of his children, is not wholly gone;—that to some extent, especially under the influence of Christianity in the past eighteen centuries, some features of this perfect law may be dimly discerned amongst men.

But our scrutiny, backed by our increasing love of these principles of righteousness, found nothing satisfactory amongst natural men—nor even amongst those professing godliness—professing to be followers in the footsteps of Jesus. We found these all, like ourselves, far short of perfection, far short of the glory of God. But as the true love, of right principles, burned in our hearts more and more fervently, we learned to *sympathize* with the entire “groaning creation,” and to “love the brethren,” for in the latter we perceived a class inspired by the same Spirit by which we ourselves had been begotten of God, the Spirit of the truth; we saw some of them struggling as we had struggled, with appreciation only of the duty-love; we saw others who had gained a higher conception than this, who had learned to appreciate the principles of righteousness and to love them, and to hate iniquity, and further, to love the God who is the embodiment of these. And the realization that these “brethren,” like ourselves, were gradually approximating the divine standard—“pressing toward the mark”—filled us with interest in them and in their battle against sin and its weaknesses, and against the adversary and his beguilements. We became more and more interested in their welfare and overcoming in proportion as we were striving and making progress in the same “narrow way.” This love of the brethren we did not have at the beginning; it marks a distinct progress in our race toward the “mark;” we might term it the third quarter-mile mark. But altho a grand attainment was achieved when this love of the

brethren reached the point of willingness to "lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John 3:16), yet it was not the full attainment of the "mark" for which we are running.

(5) The "mark of the prize" is a still higher attainment in love;—the one which we understand the Scriptures to point out as the very highest attainment is that of *loving our enemies*—not merely tolerating them, abstaining from injuring them, etc., while thinking evil of them; but far beyond this, it signifies the full purging out of all anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife, not only from our actions but also from our words, and even from our thoughts, our sentiments. It means such a *complete triumph of love in our hearts* as not only loves God supremely and delights to sacrifice in his service from love of the principles represented in his character, and love for the brethren, which makes us careful of their feelings and interests, and ready to lay down our lives on their behalf, to deliver them from evil, or to avoid putting a stumbling block in their way, but it means additionally that the love of God has been so thoroughly shed abroad in our hearts that we can love and do love every intelligent creature, and delight to do good unto all men, and to serve all men as we have opportunity, especially the household of faith.—Gal. 6:10.

This does not mean that the love which we have for the world must be of the same kind that we have for the Lord, who is the personification of righteousness, and for the "brethren," who are striving to have love, the righteousness of the law, fulfilled in them through Christ. It means rather a sympathetic love; a benevolence such as God himself exercised toward the whole world of mankind. It does not mean that we are to love the world in the sense condemned by the Apostle when he said, "Love not the world, neither the things of the world." (1 John 2:15) It does mean the attainment of the condition indicated in the expression, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever should believe on him might not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) It is a love for the world, which will not only be glad to see them lifted up out of degradation and sin to holiness and purity and righteousness, but which will be glad to coöperate to these ends as opportunities may offer—not, however, anticipating God's love and the development of his plan of the ages; but co-working with God in that great plan which he has promised shall eventually bring, during the Millennial age, blessing to every creature through the elect class now running in this race for attainment of the "mark," to win the great prize of joint-heirship with his Son. This perfect love, which, including the other developments, extends even to enemies and those who injure us and speak evil of us falsely for Christ's righteousness' sake, is the fourth mark in the race—"the mark for the prize."

While it is well for us to notice these various steps in the progress of our race toward the "mark," we are to remember that the illustration does not fit perfectly, but that rather while there is this order of progression it is less distinctly marked in our experiences, in which duty-love but gradually leads into the higher forms, remaining, but subordinately, to the end. It is a part of the blessed arrangement of God that those who are running in this race are not reckoned with according to the flesh, but as "new creatures," according to the spirit, the mind, the will, the intention. We may never hope to attain to this grand "mark" of perfect love in our flesh, so that every act and every word would give full proof of the real spirit of love which fills our hearts. Some may have greater weaknesses and defects in the flesh than others, and hence may be less able than others to uniformly and

thoroughly show the real sentiments of their hearts. But God looketh at the heart; it is the heart that he sees running in this race; it is the heart which is to attain to this "mark" set before us in the Gospel—this mark of perfect love, which includes even our enemies. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

If now we see clearly that perfect love is "the mark of the prize," we see something to strive for in our daily lives; a condition which we can by God's grace attain, and which must be obtained if we would be counted worthy a place in the kingdom. The Lord is not selecting the members of the bride of Christ by an arbitrary election; neither is he selecting them on the lines of a mere sentimentality; he is selecting them on the lines of character, heart-development; and those who attain this likeness to his Son, this "mark" of the prize, this standard of what is pleasing and acceptable to the Father—these, and these alone, may have confident hope of joint-heirship with our Lord. How important, then, that each runner in this race follow closely the Apostle's injunction to lay aside every weight and hindrance, and to run with patience the race set before us in the Gospel—"looking unto Jesus," the author of our faith, until he shall have become the finisher of it (Heb. 12:1)—giving us grace to conquer, and keeping us through his Word and through his providence unto the end of the race.

Each one on this race-course should examine himself, rather than examine others, in respect to progress in this narrow way; for each knows his own heart condition and the weakness of his own flesh better than any other knows these, the Lord alone excepted. Let us each note just where he is in the race-course, rejoicing that he is in the race at all; considering it a great privilege to be thus called and privileged to enter in this race. If we find that we have passed the first quarter-mark, let us rejoice and press on. If we find that we have passed the second also, let us rejoice so much the more, but not slack our running. If we find that we have passed the third quarter we may properly rejoice so much the more, and press with vigor on; and if we have attained to the fourth mark, of perfect love, which includes even enemies, we have indeed cause for great rejoicing. The prize is ours, if we but remain faithful. But, as the Apostle says, "Having done all, stand"—with all the armor on; stand in various testings which will then, as much as ever along the race-course, be brought to bear against us to divert us away from the mark, before the great Inspector and Giver of rewards shall say, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."—Eph. 6:13-17.

It is indispensable to those who have reached the mark of perfect love that they shall keep actively engaged in the service of the Lord, laying down their lives for the brethren, because he who loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, what assurance hath he that he really loves God, whom he hath not seen? (1 John 4:20) Such must stand, not only as representatives of God and of the principles of righteousness, but as representatives of those strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, and in the faith of his Word,—ready and willing and efficient in the encouragement of other runners in the race-course, that they likewise may attain to the "mark." As the Apostle says: "As many, therefore, as are perfect should be of this mind; and if in anything you think differently, God will reveal this to you; but to what we have attained, let us walk by the same line. Brethren, become joint-imitators of me, and watch those who are thus walking, as you have us for a pattern."—Phil. 3:15-17, *Diaglott*.

"WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?"

MATT. 22:34-46.—JAN. 27.

Our Lord's public teaching evidently ended with the Tuesday prior to his death, and with the teachings of that day our lesson has to do. The incidents of the two days preceding tended to bring matters to a climax: the leaders realized that the new Teacher was undermining their influence with the people. They considered him a false claimant to the Messiahship, yet could not deny his purity of life, the high standard of his teaching, and his wisdom. Now they saw him boldly teaching in the Temple day after day, and altho his teachings were in parabolic form their significance was undoubtedly recognized by many of the people. This very morning he had given three forceful parables, which, if received by many, would correspondingly weaken the influence

of those who "sat in Moses' seat," the doctors of the Law and the Pharisees.

One of these parables represented God as a father, and two classes in Israel as sons: the one avowing his obedience to the Father's will, nevertheless was disobedient, and represented the Scribes and Pharisees; the other son, who, refusing to do the Father's will, but subsequently obeying it, got the Father's blessing and approval, represented the class of publicans and sinners who were now flocking to Jesus and becoming interested and seeking to do the divine will, and who were accepted of the Father, notwithstanding that previously they had shirked and even publicly denied their allegiance.

The second parable represented Israel as the Lord's vineyard, and the Pharisees and doctors of the Law as the husbandmen, whose duty it was to care for the vineyard, that it should bring forth much fruit to the owner; but who appropriated the fruits to themselves—seeking honor one of another and not God's glory. The result the parable showed to be the complete overthrow of those husbandmen, and the giving of the vineyard into the care of others—the overthrow of the Jewish system or polity, and the establishment of a new order of things through other servants—our Lord Jesus and his apostles, who did not seek honors to themselves, but sought the glory of God and the welfare of his vineyard.

The third parable, the marriage of the king's son, pressed home the truth still more strongly, indicating that Christ was the King's Son, and that the heavenly Father had sent forth the invitation to the wedding-feast first to the officials of the Jews, as the representatives of that people, the doctors of the law, the Pharisees, etc., and upon their refusal he found others to take their place at the feast, which was not at all interrupted.

A consultation of the leading Jews showed that they were in accord in thinking that this Teacher must be interrupted in some manner; otherwise his influence would be too great; but the question was, Who could meet him in argument? Who would confute and refute his propositions, and thus break his influence with the people? The counsellors were of different factions, quite opposed to each other, but they were drawn together by mutual interest in their opposition to Jesus. And thus it ever is with error; the most contrary theorists are ready to cooperate with each other in opposition to the truth. Nevertheless, truth is mighty and shall ultimately prevail against all its opponents; not always so quickly, however, as in the case before us, when the Truth himself, with superhuman wisdom, confounded and overthrew the machinations of error.

Apparently the religious leaders, after conferring, decided that they would attempt to confuse the Lord and confound his teachings, and thus make a division amongst the people, getting some of them against him. First came the Herodians, who were not Jews at all, but, like Herod, Ishmaelites—sons of Abraham, through Hagar, as the Jews were his sons through Sarah. The Herodians, we may presume, were not very religious, but in considerable measure politicians; nevertheless, the desire to break the influence of Jesus was sufficient to unite with these Ishmaelites the Pharisees, who claimed to be the most strict and holy of the Jews. They had thought of a method of entrapping the Lord, which they felt sure would be a success. It was a simple method: they would ask him a question respecting taxation in which all the people were interested, high and low, rich and poor, publicans and Pharisees. They felt sure that in answering this question he would either lay himself open to the charge of teaching sedition, and therefore himself liable to arrest as an opponent of Herod and of Cæsar, or by approving the taxes they esteemed that he would alienate from himself many of the Jews who were now regarding him favorably. Hence their question: "Is it lawful to pay tribute [taxes] to Cæsar or not?"

It would scarcely be right to say that our Lord avoided their question. Rather, we would say that he gave it a much broader and more comprehensive answer than they or anyone else would have supposed possible. He said, in the hearing of the people, "Why tempt ye me?" thus in a word showing that he perceived the real animus of the question, that it was an endeavor on their part to entangle him. Then he asked for a coin of the kind generally used for taxes, and having their assent to the authority which issued it, he said, "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and to God the things which are God's." What a lesson in these words! How clearly they indicate that God's people are to be subject to the powers that be, and to wait for God's kingdom, rather than to attempt opposition, insurrection, conflict with the laws of earthly authorities!

In this respect our Lord's words are a lesson to his people today, to the effect that they should keep their religious affairs, which are of God and toward God, separate and distinct from worldly politics, which are of the Gentiles, during this period of the "Times of the Gentiles." "Ye are not of this world, even as I am not of this world." On the other hand, the Lord's people are to remember that, as originally created, man bore *God's image* stamped upon his very nature; and the persons addressed should have remembered also that God's superscription was upon them, that he had accepted them as his people,—Israel. The thought is that the heart,

the life, the affections, belong to God, and should be rendered to him, and this being done the rendering of a little tribute-money to some earthly prince would be of comparative insignificance, and the will of God recognized in the heart would cause all things to work together for their good.

The questioners found themselves answered in a manner they had never dreamed of; they were put to silence; they could take no exceptions to such an answer. It had lifted their quibble to a plane of thought which they must confess was far higher than had ever entered into their minds, and had settled it effectually.

Next came the Sadducees, no doubt boastfully saying, We alone are competent to deal with this man, and to show up his faults, tho at the same time we will be showing up the errors and faults of you Pharisees respecting a future life through a resurrection. The Sadducees were what we might term the Agnostics or Rationalists of that time. They denied that there were any spirit beings, and denied a future life for mankind, claiming that there would be *no resurrection* of the dead,—that faith in a resurrection was not warranted by any satisfactory Scriptures, and that reason also repudiated the fact.

By their question they would endeavor to show that Jesus' teachings as a whole were built upon a false foundation:—that the present life is everything, instead of nothing, and to be sacrificed to attain a future life by a better resurrection, as Jesus taught. They put what they supposed would be an unanswerable question respecting the condition of things in the resurrection age. Our Lord's reply was that the difficulty was with them, and not with the divine plan; that they had failed to understand the Scriptures, and did not properly understand the power of God, who is abundantly able to arrange for all the exigencies which will arise in the perfecting of his own gracious plans and promises. Then, going beyond this answer to their question, our Lord demonstrated to them that the resurrection is taught in the Old Testament Scriptures—not in so many words, but indirectly—that God's language with reference to the patriarchs implies that they are *not annihilated*,—implies that they are *to be resurrected*, to live again, because God would not use such language as he did use respecting beings who had passed totally out of existence, and were never to be in existence again. The answer was a complete one, as the first verse of our lesson shows.

But our Lord's opponents still hoped that they might find some one capable of vanquishing in argument him who "spake as never man spake." And so we read that when the Pharisees heard that he had "muzzled the Sadducees" they were gathered together. Their disappointment at not seeing Jesus confounded by the Sadducees was offset by their pleasure in having their Sadducee opponents thus effectually silenced. Then one of the Pharisees, who was a doctor of the law, a scribe, bethought him that he would test our Lord with a theological question much discussed amongst the Jewish rabbis; a question upon which they were very generally divided. He would at least get this great Teacher confused and show the people that, while the Scribes had such contentions amongst themselves respecting the Law, this Teacher also, when treating theological subjects, would be confused. Altho it is said that he propounded the question temptingly, this does not necessarily mean that this scribe was dishonest or in affiliation with others of the rulers who were conspiring *merely* to entrap Jesus; for our Lord himself testifies of him that he was "not far from the kingdom of God."—Mark 12:34.

His question was, Which one of the Ten Commandments is the most important, the greatest? Our Lord's answer was most direct. He divided the Law into two parts, as on the two tables of stone; the one part relating to God and man's obligations to his Creator; and the second part relating to man's responsibilities toward his fellow-men. Man's duty to God our Lord placed as supreme, yet the other as linked with it and necessary to perfect harmony with God. The force of our Lord's words is found in the fact that they are mainly a quotation from the Jewish law.—Deut. 6:4, 5.

Matthew's account does not include all the words which our Lord spoke, as recorded by Mark, beginning, "Hear, O Israel! The Lord [Jehovah] our God is one Lord [Jehovah]." This declaration the Jews were in the habit of calling, "The Shama," because the first word in the sentence in Hebrew is *Shama*, translated in English, "hear." This *Shama* declaration was considered a sacred one amongst the Jews and was enclosed in their phylacteries, repeated in their prayers, etc. The Scribe, therefore, could have not the slightest objection to our Lord's answer: it was conclusive, and, as recorded by Mark, he acknowledged the truth saying, "Well,

Master, thou hast said the truth, for there is one God, and there is no other but he; and to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the soul [being] and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."—Mark 12:32-34. See MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. V., Chap. 2.

No wonder, then, the inspired Apostle declares that "Love is the fulfilling of the law!" We can readily see that only in proportion as love is in the heart can the divine law be fulfilled by any. This does not interfere with the Scriptural declaration that "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." The reason why the Jews could not keep the law was that they did not have perfect love in their hearts, and the same difficulty would stand in the way of us who are of the *New Covenant, were it not that our Covenant makes for us the favorable arrangement through the precious blood of Christ, that our intentions as new creatures are accepted of God as instead of our natural hearts. Those who have entered into covenant relationship with God through Christ, to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, are walking "after the spirit," following after love, even tho they be not able to walk up to the spirit—up to the full standard of love in every thought and word. Their efforts in this direction are accepted as tho they were perfect, and day by day, week by week, and year by year, under the Lord's instruction and leading by his Word and providence, they are making progress in this good way—learning more and more what love is, as they see it exhibited in the Lord's Word and plan and character, and seeking and attaining more and more to the likeness of God's dear Son, whose perfect love was a copy of the Father's.

As shown elsewhere, it is this "mark" of perfect love, which must be attained in the heart, so that our wills will be fully in accord with it (however imperfect our expression of those wills in words and deeds, by reason of imperfections of the flesh). And to grow in this grace of love to God necessarily implies a growth also in love toward mankind; and especially toward those who are in sympathy and harmony with righteousness. (1 John 4:8, 20, 21; 5:1) Truly the divine Law is grandly beautiful to those who see it; and none can see it fully except as he has gradually come to appreciate its lengths and breadths and heights and depths. And each additional step of knowledge and appreciation must be accompanied by efforts toward obedience in the practice of love toward God and fellow-men, otherwise progress is impossible. Our Lord's declaration is that all of the teachings of the law, as well as all the teachings of the prophets, are in harmony with, and made dependent upon this law;—that God's promises are not intended for any others than those who are in heart-accord with his law, and if in heart-accord they will desire and endeavor to be good and do good in every sense of the word, as far and as rapidly as possible.

Seeing the number of Pharisees in his audience, gathered by the question before mentioned, our Lord considered this a favorable opportunity to turn the tables, and to ask them a question—not that he was endeavoring to trap them as they had been endeavoring to do with him; but because there is no better method of presenting a truth strikingly to the attention of a person than through a wisely directed question. He saw that the difficulty of the Pharisees in respect to himself was,

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

(1) that as a man he did not have the outward evidences of ability to establish himself as the King of Israel, the Messiah—he lacked wealth and soldiers and influence; and he lacked also that fierceness of disposition and haughty domineering manner recognized as the usual accompaniments of successful generals. (2) Their chief objection to him was, as they would put it, that he was bolstering up the weaknesses of his earthly conditions by claiming that he himself was of a heavenly origin, and that somehow or other the establishment of his kingdom would be by spirit-power.

When our Lord asked the question, "What think ye of Messiah? Of what family should he be expected?" he well knew what the answer would be;—that they would acknowledge that they were expecting Messiah to be of the tribe and family of David: and no doubt the Pharisees, while answering this question, expected that the next question would be, Do you not acknowledge that I am of the tribe and family of David, etc.? But our Lord desired to bring out another point. His earthly genealogy they knew, or could easily prove: he wished to show that the Scriptures taught that Messiah must be something more than the Son of David, and that he must be both the Son of David and Lord of David. Hence, when they answered that Messiah would be the Son of David, he enquired, What then is David's meaning when he makes use of the expression, "The Lord [*Jehovah*] said unto my Lord [*adon*, master], Sit thou at my right hand [associated with me in the kingdom, highest in my favor]"? (Psa. 110:1) The Pharisee had not studied the Scriptures sufficiently, else they would have seen this feature before, that Messiah was to be not only the son, or offspring of David, but also greater than David, the Root of David. No wonder they were unable to answer; there was nothing for them to say; the matter thoroughly upheld our Lord's claim that Messiah must have a divine origin, divine authority, and be backed by divine power in whatever he would do.

It should be noticed in this connection that both this quotation from the Psalms and the previous quotation from Deuteronomy by our Lord, are against the Trinitarian view of several persons in divine power, "equal in power and glory." They are in full accord, however, with the Scriptural teachings of a heart-oneness between the Father and the Son, and the high origin as well as the high exaltation of the Son,—"that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father;" yet nevertheless keep the two distinctly separate, as our Lord did in his teachings. See "*The At-one-ment Between God and Man*," Chaps. 2 and 6.

"From that time forth no man durst ask him any question." They were afraid to question him further in the sense of endeavoring to entrap him, having learned that he always got the advantage; the answers only resulted in greater honor to Jesus and the confusion of those who sought to entrap him. And so it is sometimes with the Lord's people today when armed with the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God; it is so sharp that their adversaries stand in fear of it. And yet this sword should be always used as our Master used it, not in bitterness nor in wrath, nor with sarcasm; but in meekness, in gentleness and patience and love, "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil."—2 Tim. 2:25.

CHRIST THE MAGNET—"I WILL DRAW ALL MEN"

JOHN 12:20-33.—JAN. 20.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"We would see Jesus."

Our Lord continued his teachings in the Temple daily after his triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the ass,—going to Bethany at night, and returning to the Temple each morning during the few days that intervened prior to his arrest and crucifixion. It was at this time that certain Greeks sought an interview with Jesus, and made known their desires through Andrew and Philip, who were probably the only two of the disciples who spoke the Greek language, they coming from a city (Bethsaida) in which the Greek language was considerably used, and their names are of Greek origin. It was most natural, therefore, that these two should be the mouthpieces of the visitors, to communicate their wishes to our Lord. The reason for the request doubtless was that our Lord at this time was in a part of the Temple inaccessible to any except Jews by birth, and these Greeks were Jewish proselytes, hence were not permitted to approach nearer the holy places than the Court of the Gentiles. Their request therefore meant that Jesus should come out to where they were for an interview.

What may have been the object of their visit we are not told; nor do we presume that our Lord's words recorded in the succeeding verses of our lesson were addressed to the Greeks, but rather that a break in the narrative occurs. Our Lord doubtless responded to their request for an interview, but the substance of their converse has not been considered necessary for the church, and hence has not been recorded. It may not be amiss, however, to mention that Eusebius, a church historian of early days, relates that an emissary was sent to Jesus by the king of Edessa, Syria, inviting him to take up his abode with him, and promising him a royal welcome. It would not be surprising if there were truth in this statement, but we know well that our Lord would refuse any such overtures, for he himself had plainly declared to the disciples when he sent them forth, "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

God had blessings in store for all the families of the earth; but not yet, and not in this way. All things must be done in a divine order and according to the divine plan, which pro-

vided for the selection of the seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:16, 29) before the general blessings could come upon the world; and the offer of membership in this seed of Abraham must, according to divine arrangement, be to the Jew first.

It was probably after the interview with the Greeks had ended, and while the hearts of the apostles were beating fast with anticipation that finally the world was waking up to recognize their Master in his true light, and would shortly exalt him to the high position foretold for the Messiah, and while their hopes on their own behalf were also running high that they should be joint-heirs with him in the kingdom, that Jesus uttered the words constituting the remainder of the lesson. It was a good opportunity for him to show them how his sufferings of the immediate future were the foundation upon which all the future glory must rest. He well knew what bitter disappointments and heart-aches would come to his faithful few when they would realize the literalness of what he had already told them respecting his death. He would give them some suggestions which would be helpful to them subsequently, and enable them to look through the sufferings to the glories in reservation, unseeable except with the eye of faith.

It was, we believe, with this thought in mind that our Lord declared, "The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified." The disciples at first would take this as intimating his earthly exaltation, but he speedily drew their attention to the fact that while the beginning of his glorification was near, it must be preceded by the suffering of death. His glorification began in his resurrection from the dead, when he was raised in incorruption, in power, a glorious spiritual body—"a quickening spirit," as the Apostle explains. (1 Cor. 15:42-45) This glorification was enhanced when he was received up into glory in the Father's presence, there to appear on our behalf, and at the right hand of divine power to wait for the appointed time when he should take unto himself his great power and reign as King over all the earth, which he had redeemed with his own precious blood.

"THE HOUR IS COME!"

The expression, "The hour is come," is not necessarily to be understood as signifying sixty minutes; just as the word "day" does not always signify twenty-four hours, but a comparatively short period or epoch, as for instance, "Noah's day," "Moses' day," "Jesus' day," etc. As compared with "Jesus' day" the experiences referred to were properly enough said to be occurring in that "hour," or short time.

Having thus assured them that the beginning of his glorification was not far distant, our Lord makes very impressive the necessity of his death, by saying, "Verily, verily,"—that is, Truly, truly, most positively, emphatically, I give you the illustration that my glorification according to the divine arrangement, must come through my death, even as a grain of wheat would remain but one grain unless it were planted, and through the dying of one grain life and being were given to a number. Had our Lord chosen to do so, he at one time had the privilege of remaining alone,—of not dying on our behalf. Had he followed this course we would still have been unredeemed and he could have brought forth no fruitage. But he had consecrated his life; he had voluntarily engaged to sacrifice himself on behalf of Adam and his race, in compliance with the Father's will, and hence he declares that if *now* he would love his life he would lose it; that on the contrary, instead of seeking to save himself he must indeed hate or *despise* the present life in comparison with the future and eternal one which the Father had promised him as a reward for obedience unto death.

It will be noticed that in this understanding of it, this 25th verse is applicable to our Lord alone, and not to his followers, for they had no life to lose; they and the whole world were dead, under condemnation of death, because of father Adam's transgression. Our Lord alone had life, which he had a right to lay down or exchange in order to keep it unto eternal life. Such privileges could not come to his followers until first Jesus had given his life "a ransom for all." Then as soon as the ransom was given and had been accepted of the Father, the redeemed ones (believers justified by their faith) could be reckoned as having life-rights which they would be privileged to consecrate upon the Lord's altar, and to exchange for the heavenly life, following in the footsteps of Jesus.

And in full accord with this interpretation is the next verse, which distinctly speaks of Jesus' followers, saying that all who desire to serve him, and to be with him, must follow him—follow him in this experience, which he, as the forerunner in this way, was already passing through; *viz.*, the consecration and then the despising of his earthly existence, as

compared with the spirit life and heavenly glory promised.

It is to their great disadvantage that Christian people so generally fail to discern that there are to be several different classes of saved ones—the overcomers, the great company and the restitution class. The benevolently disposed of those seeking to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, in earthly self-denials and sacrifices, and in despising the present life in comparison with the future one promised, are robbed of much of their joy and peace and consolation by the thought that only such footstep-followers can ever be with the Lord and honored by the Father; for they realize that such servants constitute a "little flock" indeed. The effect of their ignorance of the divine plan is, with many, a hardening of heart in an attempt to be more like what they understand God to be, as expressed in what they believe to be his plan of eternal torment for all except the little flock. Others, on the other hand, cultivating their benevolence, refuse to believe that the way to this association with Jesus and the divine glorification is so narrow—they widen it more and more to take in their friends, their families, their neighbors, and as many as possible of the heathen; and thus, unconsciously perhaps, gradually but surely they lower the standard of true discipleship, not only for others but also for themselves: they become more and more satisfied with outward forms and ceremonies and platitudes and moralities, and come more and more to consider that their former views were incorrect—when they supposed, in harmony with our Lord's words, that all who would be with him and be honored of the Father, must take up his cross and follow in his footsteps.

The light of this harvest-time now shining upon the divine Word and plan makes clear to us, not only the height of the calling of the "elect" church to joint-heirship with her Lord in his glory, but also the reality of the fact that all who would share that glory in the future, must suffer with him in the present life—must be crucified to sin and to self and to the world; must rise to newness of life in Christ Jesus reckoned now, actually, if faithful, in the first resurrection. But this harvest light makes clear to us also that the class now called, now intended of the Father to be joint-sacrificers with his son and joint-heirs with him of his glory, is altogether but a small fraction of the human family, and that the others who receive not this high calling are to be otherwise blessed in due time under the Millennial kingdom, by the glorified Jesus and his glorified church and bride.

Those who have this light and appreciate it are saved from the discouragements common to others. They can see the reasonableness of making the way to so high a station as that to which they are called a very narrow one, which will admit at its opening only those who are justified through faith in Christ and who are desirous of pleasing and serving God, and which, at its furthest end, will admit to glory only those who have passed faithfully through the experiences of this time, and are found in heart and character copies of God's dear Son.—Rom. 8:29.

"Now is my soul troubled"—my feelings are turbulent; I am in a commotion. Shall I pray, Father, deliver me from this hour? Shall I not, on the contrary, remember that for this very cause I am come to this hour, that I might endure, and that willingly, rather than ask to be delivered? I might ask the Father for a certain kind of deliverance which would not invalidate the engagement which I made, that I would give my life in obedience to his will. I might ask him to permit some calamity to befall me which would result in my death and thus save me from the peculiarly trying and ignominious conditions incident to my apprehension and execution as a criminal—as the worst kind of a criminal, a blasphemer against my heavenly Father. Such a deviation would seem to me not an unreasonable concession for one who has shown his faithfulness to the Father's will in all things. And yet I will not ask even this concession. Rather, I will submit my will to the Father's will most absolutely, and carry out to the very jot and tittle the spirit as well as the letter of my covenant. Let the Father's will be done in every particular; it must be the wisest and best, else it would not be his plan. It is for this very purpose that I came to this hour, that I might manifest, demonstrate, to the Father my devotion, my most implicit obedience to his will. Proceed, Father! Glorify thine own name and in thine own way, at whatever the cost to me!

Then a voice was heard, a voice which some understood and which others misunderstood, as is always the case with the voice of God. The world heareth no message; believers hear the message partially; but the begotten sons, in perfect accord with the Father, hear and understand fully. No doubt