

by the very ones who, if not deceived regarding its teachings, would be held and blessed by it.

The general effect, not far distant, will be, first open infidelity, then anarchy. For much, very much of this, lukewarm Christians, both in pulpit and pews, who know or ought to know better, are responsible. Many such are willing to compromise the truth, to slander God's character, and to stultify and deceive themselves, for the sake of peace, or ease, or present earthly advantage. And any minister, who, by uttering a word for an unpopular truth, will risk the loss of his stipend and his reputation for being "established" in the bog of error, is considered a bold man, even though he

We have given foregoing but a mere suggestion of the light now shining in "due season" for the "household of faith." We invite correspondence from all who "hunger and thirst after right." We have free tracts, and books to loan to the poor in spirit who are poor also in purse. See page 2

VOL. XXI

ALLEGHENY, PA., APRIL 15, 1900

No. 8

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

The "shaking" of the ecclesiastical "heavens" continues. Dr. Hillis' denunciation of the Westminster Confession of Faith, which as a Presbyterian he has supported for many years, is about as strong as he could make it. He is credited with the following language in his discourse to the Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, N. Y., on Sunday, March 25:—

"The Confession of Faith says that certain men and angels are foreordained to everlasting death, being particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished, and every young man who enters the Presbyterian church has to solemnly swear to believe and teach this frightful view. And every attempt to revise and expel that statement from the creed has been successfully combated by a majority that wishes to retain the doctrine. It would seem as if a man would prefer to be burned at the stake rather than hold or assert or charge such infinite cruelty upon the all-merciful and all-loving God. The day the scholastics wrote that chapter in the Confession of Faith they got the devil confused with God.

"I would rather shake my fist in the face of the Eternal and fling every vile epithet toward his stainless throne, where eternal mercy sits with the world's atoning Savior, than lift my hand with that creed before God's throne and affirm that I taught or believed it."

The matter is before the Chicago Presbytery, which is divided in sentiment—many of its members averring that they agree to Dr. Hillis' views of the subject. The gentleman proposes to resign his connection with Presbyterianism if the latter objects to his attacks upon it from the inside. The world looks on approvingly, and says, Bravo, Dr. Hillis! But to our view the gentleman has little to be proud of; for, granting that, as he says, he has held privately for years the views he now expresses publicly, it follows that for all those years he lived a lie before the whole world. And if for those years he kept silence because he was making a personal name and fame and following, which he has now attained, it follows that for all those years, according to the gentleman's own words quoted above, he was doing worse than "shaking his fist in the face of the Eternal"—worse than to have "flung—every vile epithet toward God's stainless throne where eternal mercy sits with the world's atoning Savior."

What an astounding confession this is to be sent forth to the world! We are reminded of our Lord's words, "Out of thine own mouth I will judge thee!" And yet this side of the case strikes very few. Why? Because they are in a similar plight having been for years directly or indirectly upholding this same creed and thus to the extent of their influence (either as ministers and officers or else as common members of churches avowing these creeds) they, too, have been thus blaspheming the Eternal and his stainless throne. Other ministers in Presbyterian churches look with envy at Dr. Hillis' freedom and wish that the time might soon come that they would have sufficient individual influence and prestige to stand alone, that they, too, might declare their independence and cease their blasphemy against the divine character which causes uneasiness, notwithstanding long usage to it and notwithstanding the fact that "others do the same." Added to this is now another fear, that the tide of public sentiment is on the turn—that the pews, if they knew as much as the pulpits respecting such matters, would be much more honest;—and that the risk of jumping out too soon as "reformers," and thus losing prestige and possibly bread and butter, may be offset soon by the reverse risk of not jumping soon enough to get glory as a "reformer" and on the contrary being covered with odium as those who have deceived the people as long as possible,

ignominiously withhold his name from his published protests.

If professed Christians would be honest with themselves and true to God, they would soon learn that "their fear toward God is taught by the precepts of men." (Isa. 29:13) If all would decide to let God be true, though it should prove every man a liar (Rom. 3:4), and show all human creeds to be imperfect and misleading, there would be a great creed smashing work done very shortly. Then the Bible would be studied and appreciated as never before; and its testimony that the wages of sin is death (extinction), would be recognized as a "just recompense of reward."

* * *

Rev. Dr. Donehoo, of Pittsburgh, the very next Sunday (April 1st) took a similar stand against the Westminster Confession, which when ordained, he solemnly vowed that he believed and would teach. Yet, while still posing as a Presbyterian and doing violence to his oath of office, he confessed in the following language, quoted in the daily press, that he has for the many years of his Presbyterian membership and ministry been acting a lie—he confesses he "never could believe" what he professed. We quote:—

"The question suggested to me by the text is the following, 'Are men foreordained to be damned?' It is about the bluntest, harshest, most unreasonable one that an unprejudiced reader of the Bible could have presented for his consideration. I am sorry to say that it is one that has been present in my thoughts from my earliest recollection. I have heard it discussed in the pulpit, have read many works on the subject, and have often gravely considered it in private conversation with brethren, tho I have never for one instant had any doubts on the subject so far as I am concerned. Whatever the Westminster divines may have believed on the subject, their language as now understood expresses in unmistakable phrase that such was their belief. Thus they declare: 'By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others are foreordained to everlasting death, and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.'

"I never could believe such a thing, and I pray to God to preserve me from ever either unwittingly endorsing or so much as entertaining such an insane thought in my heart. Nor would I refer to this at all were it not just now published all over the land that the great Presbyterian church was about to drag a faithful minister of the gospel to trial for protesting against the idea that any man is foreordained of God to be damned to all eternity. If such a sifting process as that just now hinted at was to be fearlessly put in force throughout the church, and every man who preaches and prays every Sabbath day of his life the very opposite of this horrible dogma, whether he has the brains or the courage to admit it or not, there would be such a depletion in the ranks of the church as would throw St. Bartholomew in the shade."

The gentleman frankly avows that he would have kept quiet still longer, and have continued to tacitly endorse the slander against God had it not been his fear that a hunt for "heretics" might be started in Presbyterian circles. He hopes that a sufficient number of Presbyterian ministers will growl to deter the others from enforcing the laws and rules of the denomination. Yet strange to say, the men who stay inside the denomination and denounce it, and declare their perfidy in respect to its teachings and their unfaithfulness to God's character and Word, are honored; while honest men who refuse thus to stultify themselves and to blaspheme God's holy name for bread and "honor one of another" are disesteemed. After all then the chief fault is with the people;—the preachers merely debase themselves to supply the popular demand. It is time for all who have any moral honesty to show it. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues."—Rev. 18:4.

SELF-DENIAL AND CROSS-BEARING CONDITIONS

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me [be my follower], let him deny himself, and take up his cross."
Matt. 16:24.

Generally the thought attached to this passage in the minds of Christian people is that the Lord is here laying down the terms and conditions upon which eternal torment may be escaped. This result of false teaching, received from earliest infancy, thus casts a false shadow upon very many of the utterances of our Lord and the apostles. To the Jew, however, who had no thought in his mind of eternal torment for anybody, the above utterance would have no such significance. The disciples, to whom it was addressed, received it exactly for what it says. To understand it as they did let us take their standpoint: As Jews they shared the nation's hopes, based upon the Abrahamic promise, viz., that in due time God proposed to bless all nations, and that Israel was to be his instrumentality through which the blessings would flow. We are to remember that based upon this hope all Israel was in expectation of a Messiah whose first work it would be to organize Israel in some sense of the word, and then, as its great Head and Guide, bring to pass the blessed conditions.

The disciples knew that Jesus claimed to be this great Messiah, and they had left all to follow him, in order that they might have a share with him in his kingdom,—according to his promise, a very honorable share in it, a seat in his throne. When, therefore, he addressed them on this subject in the above words nothing could have been further from their thoughts than that he should mean that only those who would conform to these strict rules would escape an eternity of torture: on the contrary, their understanding would be that all who would not conform to these rules, and be close followers of Jesus' example, would fail to share with him in the kingdom glories and honors—fail to be associated with him as joint-heirs of the kingdom. They certainly expected that his kingdom, when organized, would bless all nations, and if it would bless all other nations assuredly it would bless also the Jewish nation, out of which the Master was proposing to select his joint-heirs. From this standpoint our Lord's words are reasonable, and from no other standpoint.

It would be thoroughly unreasonable every way to suppose that the Lord laid down the hard and fast condition that everyone who would not become his follower and a cross-bearer to the full extent of self-denial, even of parents and children if need be, would be tormented on this account, or even destroyed. In fact, we know that the same great Teacher declared, "No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him," and we see most evidently that but a small proportion of the nations was at that time drawn to Jesus by the Father through the word of grace. We see that the great majority were blinded. How evident, then, it is that our Lord had no reference to the blinded ones who did not become his disciples, but intended his remarks exclusively for the class addressed, whose eyes had been opened and whose ears had been unstopped, and who had become his followers by a consecration. Note the Master's words, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear;"—here is the suggestion that the majority of the Jews did not see and did not hear, and hence had no call to be followers of Jesus in the same special sense; the majority being not even drawn of the Father, not being in a condition of heart to be drawn by the truth.

Note how our Lord refers to this matter, and speaks of the Jewish leaders, saying that they were blind guides, leading the blind people, and all about to "fall into the ditch." (Matt. 15:14) This falling into the ditch seems to those who are deluded by the eternal torment theory, to be but another suggestion that all the Jewish nation, both leaders and people were fast hastening to "hell," to torment. But on the contrary, the Scriptures show clearly that the ditch to which they were hastening was the great time of trouble which came upon their nation after our Lord's crucifixion, and which culminated with the utter destruction of their city by the army of Titus in the year 70 A. D.—since which time they have been nationally disintegrated and destroyed.

That the apostles did not understand that all who did not follow with them in the narrow way of self-sacrifice, self-denial, cross-bearing, were to be tormented, is testified by the Apostle Peter who, speaking under the inspiration of the holy spirit, declared to these same Jews that they had crucified Messiah, and then he adds, "But I wot that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers."—Acts 3:17.

This blind ignorance is referred to also by the Apostle Paul: in discussing the matter in his Epistle to the Romans he pointed out that Israel was blinded and did stumble and fall into the ditch, and did not attain the great prize which it was seeking, and that the elect only obtained that prize. He points us to the elect "remnant" selected from the nation be-

fore its complete disintegration, and informs us that this remnant, being less than the number which God had predetermined, the elect church, is to be completed during this Gospel age by the selection of the remainder from amongst the Gentiles to be fellow-heirs with the Israelites in the same promise made to Abraham. These are denominated "spiritual Israel," and the Apostle points out that this change in the divine operation was foreknown to the Lord, and was a part of his plan, as revealed through the prophets—that the Gentiles also should be fellow-heirs of the same promise.—Rom. 11:7-12.

The Apostle proceeds to show that the blindness will continue upon fleshly Israel until the Gospel church is completed, and that then blindness will be turned from them, and they shall see; and God's favor shall come upon them, and they will be amongst the first to be blessed under the new order of things following the glorification of the elect church.

With these thoughts in our minds, putting ourselves exactly in the place of the apostles, we are much better prepared to understand the meaning of the Master's words, "If any man will be my follower he must deny himself and take up his cross." The Apostle points us to the same thought, saying that it is only if we suffer with him that we shall reign with him; if we be dead with him, that we shall live with him. The reference is exclusively to those on the "narrow way," and does not at all refer to the world of mankind. The verses following, a part of the same discourse, declare that whosoever would save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for the Lord's sake shall find it; this also is exclusively applicable to those who had had their eyes opened, and had become his followers, and is not at all applicable to others.

All who become Jesus' followers first take two steps, viz., justification and consecration, or sanctification. Justification is imputed to them as the result of faith in Christ as their Redeemer, and its object is to place fallen sinful human beings on such a reckonedly perfect plane or standing before God as would permit them to present their bodies living sacrifices, "holy and acceptable to God" through Christ. Consecration, self-surrender, sanctification, called in our text self-denial, consists in the giving up of our wills to the will of the Lord: and our wills controlling this implies our all.

This class, having received their share of the ransom, (justification) and having used it, exchanging its hopes of restitution for the heavenly hopes, "heavenly calling," spiritual prosperity and prospective joint-heirship with Christ, have no longer any earthly rights or hopes: hence such must either gain the spiritual life they have started out for or must lose all life. And the terms or conditions upon which the heavenly life is to be attained are the sacrifice of the earthly life and its interests. Therefore, as here stated, in respect to this class, whoever of them saves his earthly life (refusing to sacrifice it, etc.) after having made the consecration, loses it entirely—loses all hope of a future life. And on the other hand, those of this class who are now faithful in laying down the present life for the Lord's sake shall find life eternal under the glorious conditions of the kingdom. "If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him."—2 Tim. 2:11, 12.

The succeeding verse (26) is a part of the same discourse, not to people in general, but applicable to the disciples, the followers and cross-bearers only, the little flock. It reads: "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul (being, existence), or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul (his future existence)?" We are to remember that only one offer of life eternal has yet been made to mankind; and this was the offer that Jesus was making to his followers, and that has since been made throughout this Gospel age to whoever has ears to hear and a will to walk in the narrow way. There is no offer of eternal life to the world yet, altho the Scriptures clearly show us that there is to be an offer of eternal life under other conditions during the Millennial age; but none can either accept or reject those conditions yet, for they are not offered to any.

Those now invited to eternal life under its most glorious conditions of "glory, honor, immortality," and joint-heirship with the Redeemer in the kingdom are exhorted by our Lord to appreciate highly the value of eternal life; and it is implied that anyone who will at all consider the matter will readily acknowledge that to give all that he has of earthly life and its vanities in exchange for his life eternal would be to get that great boon at a very small price—at a great bargain; We see men who as death draws near, are willing to give their all to retain their hold a little longer on the present life; how much more should we be willing to lay down our lives

voluntary sacrifices, in daily self-denials, in sharing the sufferings of Christ in this present time, that we may thereby attain, according to God's good promise in Christ, the glorious and eternal life promised to the overcomers.

WHAT CONSTITUTES CROSS-BEARING?

But now we come back to the original proposition of our text, and inquire particularly respecting the declared terms of discipleship, What do they signify, and how do they apply to us individually in our daily lives? What is it for us to deny ourselves? It signifies that having consecrated ourselves to the Lord we should have no wills of our own; self should be ignored, or, as the Apostle Paul expresses it, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." "Reckon ye yourselves dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God." Self-denial, then, means to ignore self-will, self-gratification; and this includes all the earthly ambitions and desires, the sinful, and no less those that are laudable and proper. We pledge ourselves at the very beginning that we are not following our own inclinations and our own wills, but are to be wholly subject to the will of our Head, the Lord Jesus, if we may be in turn counted in as members in particular of his body, the elect church.

Very graciously, the Lord veils from our sight at the beginning of the way some of the trials of the flesh and conflicts between the mind of the flesh and the new mind, which this full consecration must involve if we press along the line toward the mark which he has set for us as the standard of character. Could we see all that is implied from the very beginning of the race we would be disheartened no doubt, but as we grow in grace, and become strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, we grow also in knowledge and in love toward the Lord and toward all who are in fellowship with him, and thus it becomes daily easier for us, as we sing,

". . . the pathway smooths
Since first we learned to love it."

As a result, by and by the trials which came at first seem to be as nothing, but other trials come instead, as we discern more distinctly, more clearly, the good, the acceptable, the perfect will of God. Thus our trial condition progresses, and what is required of us is that step by step we shall be faithful to what we see to be the Lord's will, and shall seek to the best of our ability to submit ourselves thereto. This is self-denial.—forsaking all else to be Jesus' disciples.

Cross-bearing is closely related to self-denial, and yet a distinction between them may be noted. Self-denial relates more particularly to passive obedience and endurance for the Lord's sake; cross-bearing relates more particularly to activities in the Lord's service, which we find to be contrary to our natural inclinations. Faithfulness in self-denial means courage and zeal; cross-bearing means victory, overcoming. Our self-denials may be victories gained in our own hearts, of which others may know nothing, and of which they should know nothing, if we desire to have the fulness of the Lord's blessing, for we are to make sure that we do not deny ourselves to be seen of men, but merely for the Lord's approval. Our cross-bearings, however, may be seen, to some extent at least, by those who are in close contact with us, and especially by those who are walking in the same "narrow way."

CROSS-BEARERS GENERALLY MISUNDERSTOOD

And how appropriate it is that all cross-bearers should recognize each other, and be able to sympathize with one another and give an encouraging word, a sympathizing look or a helping hand, as opportunity may offer. As for others, we cannot expect sympathy from them, for from their standpoint we are counted fools (Acts 26:24; 1 Cor. 1:18; 2:14; 3:18), unwise, following an unwise course, bringing our difficulties upon ourselves, because we insist on following an ideal Pattern, the pattern of our dear Redeemer, instead of following the pattern of churchianity and the world. Such, of course, have only sneers for the faithful, and often no doubt think of them as they speak of them, as being hypocrites. This indeed is all part of the cross-bearing, especially when those who deride and who sneer are those whom we love and whose esteem we would enjoy, if we could have it in conjunction with the Master's "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Look, for instance, at our Lord Jesus, and the cross which he bore—not the literal cross of wood which he bore to Calvary, amid shame and jeers, but the cross-bearing which he practised continually throughout the three and a half years of his ministry from the time of his consecration at Jordan. Note how faithfulness to the truth, in testifying respecting his mission, the kingdom that he was establishing, and the terms and conditions of membership in it, being misunderstood by the chief priests, scribes and Pharisees, led to opposition

continually, so that they not only maligned his name, but in their hatred sought his life and finally obtained it. Note that they were not worldly people, as that word is generally understood, but members of the leading denominations of his day: and that the so-called holiness people of that day were his most bitter assailants. He could indeed have fallen into line with the Pharisees or with the Sadducees, and have been considered "respectable," and have had a large following, but fidelity to the truth would not permit him to do this, but forced him to take a stand independent of all sects and parties, and this brought against him the wrath of all of them, and was his continual and daily cross-bearing, that had to be borne, if he would "overcome" and be granted association with the Father in the kingdom. And may not all of his faithful followers expect similar experiences, under similar conditions now? We think so; we know so; they have such experiences.

The Apostle mentions some of these crosses, and declares that the endurance of them are marks of his faithfulness as a servant of the Lord: "In much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings," by dishonor, by evil report, as deceivers and yet true, as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing, as poor, yet making many rich, as having nothing, yet possessing all things." (2 Cor. 6:4-10) How much our Master knew of being counted a deceiver, while yet he was the true one, of being called Beelzebub, while really the Prince of life! What a cross it must have been to endure such slanderous misrepresentations, and contradictions of sinners against himself; and how faithfully he bore the cross. And shall not all of his followers expect to similarly share this cross with him, and be misunderstood, misrepresented, misjudged, by those who are more or less blinded by the adversary! Such dishonor, such evil reports, are amongst the things which our Lord specifically declared would be a part of our cross-bearing when he said, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad (in all such cross-bearings), for great is your reward in heaven."

CHRIST'S FOLLOWERS SHARE HIS CROSS

In a word, our Lord calls upon his disciples to follow him, in direct opposition to the world-current. He declares that the disciple must not expect to be above his Lord in being spared such experiences, but promises great rewards at the end of the journey—life eternal, with exceeding glory.

The awfulness of the teaching of the creeds of Christendom respecting the fate of the world in general is only grasped when we begin to seriously consider the narrowness of the way in which all of the Lord's true followers are called to walk in his footsteps. Surely, if all except such faithful saints, an extremely "little flock," are to be eternally tormented, it would mean that there are to be many members of every family on earth consigned to that awful and unending agony. How absurd is the proposition, how unreasonable, how unscriptural, when the Scriptures are rightly understood!

But how reasonable is the proper interpretation of our text, how reasonable its application to those who have been drawn of the Father to the Son, and who then have accepted of the Son and his great sacrifice for sin, and who have considered it a reasonable service to present their bodies living sacrifices, and have consecrated their all to him, that they might have fellowship in his sufferings, and ultimate fellowship also in his glory. These can see readily that the kingdom honor and glory to which they are called, are blessings so great, honors so profound, and their works as kings and priests and judges in the Millennial age so particular, that all of these testings of faith, patience, love and obedience are wholly reasonable to them.

All such we exhort, especially at this particular season of the commemoration of our dear Redeemer's death, that they catch not merely at the outward form of self-denial, practiced by nominal Christendom during the Lenten season, but that whatever of outward self-denial they may practice they may learn the full meaning of self-consecration and immolation which our Lord's words signify; and that they be not content with the wearing of a cross as an ornament, but grasp fully and clearly the purport of the Master's words respecting the true cross-bearing, that in due time they may also attain to the crown-wearing promised as a reward to the faithful. Let us at this season of the year renew our covenant of sacrifice with the Lord, determined, in the words of the Apostle, that we will more zealously than ever—Lay aside every weight, and every besetting sin, and run with patience the race set before us in the Gospel, looking unto Jesus, in whose footsteps we seek to run.—Heb. 12:1

CHRIST THE FIRST TO RISE FROM THE DEAD

MARK 5:22-24, 35-43.—APRIL 15.

"He is risen, as he said."—Matt. 28:6.

The selection of the narrative of the awakening of the daughter of Jairus as an Easter lesson was no doubt under the common but mistaken supposition that the miracle performed upon this child was similar to the miracle of our Lord's resurrection, which Easter Sunday generally celebrates. We will examine the lesson on its own merits, and then see that the Scriptures distinctly and pointedly distinguish between the two miracles—and that the miracle performed upon Jairus' daughter is nowhere designated a resurrection, nor was it such in fact.

Jairus was evidently a man of considerable influence in his community, for to be a ruler of the synagogue meant, in the custom of that time, that he was also a member of the local Sanhedrin, the court which tried certain classes of offenders, preserved general order, convened the assembly, etc. The rulers of the synagogue had its affairs in charge also, and invited its readers and speakers, managed the schools in connection with it, etc. As a man of high station in the city, he no doubt was acquainted with the nobleman of the same city (Capernaum), whose son Jesus had healed, as recorded in John 4:46-53. His knowledge of that case no doubt helped to increase his own faith in the Lord's power so remarkably manifested in the circumstances of this lesson.

It was while Jesus was at the house of Matthew (Levi, the publican—see lesson of March 18), enjoying the banquet which Matthew had intended should bring his publican friends in contact with the Master, and probably toward the conclusion of the banquet, that Jairus arrived on he scene to beseech our Lord for the recovery of his daughter. In the account as given by Matthew (9:18) the ruler is represented as saying that his daughter was already dead, while in the account before us the implication is that altho she was in an extreme condition life still remained. The probability is that at the time Jairus left his child she was in an extremely critical condition, and that he surmised that by the time he was talking with the Lord she was quite probably dead—and such was the case and the servants already enroute to notify Jairus). Quite possibly Jairus mentioned the matter from this standpoint: She was at the point of death when I left her; she is no doubt dead now, but come and lay thy hands on her that she may be healed and live. It was a wonderful exhibition of faith, and one which our Lord evidently fully appreciated, for he did not hesitate to go with him.

It was during this journey from the home of Matthew to the home of Jairus, a great throng of people accompanying him, that the poor woman who had an issue of blood twelve years, and had spent all that she had and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, conceived the thought that if she could but touch the hem of Jesus' garment she should be cured—and by the exercise of her faith in this manner was healed. We can imagine the feelings of Jairus in consequence of this delay; while it added to his faith in the power of Jesus, it at the same time tested his faith in respect to the recovery of his child. The test became more severe, because just at this juncture messengers arrived from his wife, saying that the child was dead, and that it would therefore be unnecessary to trouble the great Teacher.

Similar are the Lord's providential dealings with many of his people: he gives us a ground for faith, and then, as we exercise that faith and act in harmony with it, he gives fresh corroboration; meanwhile testing it, by permitting various difficulties, contrary suggestions, doubts, fears, etc.—not only such as would arise in our minds, but such as would be brought to us through others, sometimes those nearest and dearest. Yet our experiences have been that in all such trials of faith the Lord has been ready to speak peace, comfort and full assurance to our hearts, if we would but listen to his words. So it was with Jairus. When the servants arrived, and said, Hope is gone, submit to the inevitable; Jesus also spoke a word, saying, "Be not afraid; only believe." O, how much there is in faith! How necessary God causes that it shall be during this present age. He desires that His people shall "Walk by faith." "Without faith it is impossible to please God," and the Apostle assures us that "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." Indeed, in many respects faith (not credulity) is the prime essential of an "overcomer." No one can be an overcomer without it; with it anyone can be an "overcomer." God's grace in Christ making full provision for all such. Divine promises and blessing are to the faith-full only—both as respects the present and the eternal life.

Jesus when he had come to Jairus' house, permitted only Peter, James and John to accompany him as witnesses of the power of God. The favor manifested toward these three

apostles on so many occasions is not to be esteemed as simply a selfish partiality but rather as an indication that these three who were specially zealous amongst the apostles were further advanced in spiritual things, and best able to appreciate the privileges granted them. Their selection was but another manifestation of what our Lord called attention to in one of his parables as being the divine principle of government, viz., that "to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly"—to him that hath used, and profited by divine favor most faithfully, shall proportionately more and larger favors be granted; because he more than others has by his faithfulness become capable of enjoying and appreciating and profiting by additional favors. The Lord evidently loves fervency (warmth) of spirit or disposition. No doubt he appreciates some who are naturally cold and phlegmatic, but just as evidently he appreciates still more those who have a keener interest, a warmer love, and more intense manifestations. Noting our Lord's appreciation of zeal should lead all who are his followers today to strive after greater fervency of spirit, greater zeal and energy in running the race set before us in the Gospel—greater interest in the Master's cause in all its branches.

The journey both ways had consumed considerable time, and the preparations for the burial were far advanced at the time of our Lord's arrival, for it was the Jewish custom to have a speedy burial after death. The hired mourners (whom Matthew designates "minstrels") were already there, and the usual unseemly tumult of the time was in progress. Our Lord rebuked the mourners and spoke of the maid as sleeping, just as he similarly said of Lazarus, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; I go that I may awake him." This aroused the laugh of scorn, his hearers not appreciating what he meant, even as the disciples did not appreciate the word "sleep," when used in connection with Lazarus, until our Lord said plainly, "Lazarus is dead."

The use of the word "sleep" for death is very frequent in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament the patriarchs are said to "sleep with their fathers," and this was said alike of both good and bad, kings and prophets and common people. In the New Testament the Apostle speaks of those that "sleep in Jesus," for whom we are to sorrow not as others who have no hope, because we believe in the resurrection of the dead. In the case of Stephen it is said that he "fell asleep," and the Apostle in speaking of the closing of the Gospel age declared that some of the church would not thus sleep, saying, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." (1 Kings 2:10; Acts 7:60; 1 Thes. 4:14; 1 Cor. 15:51). Dr. Lightfoot calls attention to the fact that the Jewish theological writings, the Talmud, contain the expression "when he slept" hundreds of times, as signifying the time of death; and our word cemetery means "sleeping place." Dr. Trench, the noted scholar, says of this word sleep, "Thereby the reality of death is not denied, but only the fact implicitly assumed that death will be followed by a resurrection, as sleep is (followed) by an awakening."

Death would not have been even figuratively called sleep, except for the provision for a resurrection, nor would it have been appropriate had no awakening of the dead been intended. And altho this awakening could not take place without a redemption, and altho the redemption price securing the awakening was not paid until Calvary, nevertheless all of God's people who had faith in his promise made to Abraham ("In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed") realized that what God had promised he would surely fulfil, and that since millions of the families of the earth had gone down into death prior to the promise, and before the coming of the Seed of Abraham, therefore the fulfillment of that promise signified a general awakening from the sleep of death for all mankind—in order that all might have the opportunity of being blessed by the glorious Seed of Abraham.

It was from this standpoint that our Lord spoke and acted; he was already, since his baptism at Jordan, in process of paying the ransom—his entire life was consecrated and had been accepted of the Father, altho the sacrifice had not yet been finished, and was not completed until on Calvary he cried in his dying moment, "It is finished." As a result of the finishing of the ransom there, our Lord declared that in due time the prison-house of death would be opened and that all the sleeping prisoners would come forth; he declared, "All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and come forth;" they that have done well (those now on trial, and approved by the Lord as overcomers) unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done ill (those who

have not escaped the condemnation, nor been approved of (God) unto a resurrection by judgment-trial.—John 5:28, 29.)

That judgment-trial will be their blessed opportunity of coming to a knowledge of the truth respecting the divine character and plan, and if they will of coming into harmony with it, and by the development of character during the Millennium reaching full perfection of restitution at its close. Meantime, they sleep—"sleep in Jesus," in the sense that a hope of awakening in the resurrection morning centers in Jesus by divine arrangement, through the atonement sacrifice which by the grace of God, he gave a ransom for all.—1 Tim. 2:6.

Thus we see that the future life held out before us in the Scriptures is a resurrection hope. In harmony with this the Apostle declared, "Of the hope and resurrection of the dead am I called in question." (Acts 23:6), and again it is declared that his constant theme in preaching was "Jesus and the resurrection." (Acts 17:18) There is no hope of a future life without a resurrection, and there is no hope of a resurrection except in Jesus—that he died for our sins, and thus paid the death penalty which was against us, and thus permitted the wages of sin, death, to become merely a temporary "sleep," from which he will awaken mankind, that they may be blessed under all the great and wonderful privileges of his kingdom during the Millennial age, otherwise in Scripture called the day of judgment, or trial for the world, as this present Gospel age is the day of trial for the church.

When ready, in the presence of his three chosen disciples and the father and mother of the maiden, Jesus took her by the hand, saying, "Talitha cumi." These words are in the Aramaic language spoken by the common people of that time. "Talitha" in the ordinary dialect of the people, is a word of endearment to a young maiden, so that the words are equivalent to 'Rise, my child.'—Alford.

AWAKENING OF THE DEAD NOT RESURRECTION

The maid awakened to life and consciousness. She did not come back from heaven or from hell, but merely awakened out of the sleep of death, and renewed the experiences of life as before. Such an awakening from sleep—such a restoration of the life forces that had been temporarily suspended, is of the nature of a resurrection, but is not a resurrection. We are to remember that the maiden was not *alive* before—that perfect life has not been enjoyed by any member of Adam's race since father Adam's fall into disobedience and under the divine sentence of death. As the Apostle declares, "In Adam all die," and again, "Death passed upon all," and this maiden was no exception to the rule. Our Lord, in speaking on the subject, implied that none have life in any sense of the word, except those who accept him, and they only in a reckoned sense by faith. His words were, "Let the dead bury their dead." He that hath the Son hath life." As the maiden was therefore legally dead, without perfect life, and without the right to it, before she fell asleep, so likewise, when she awakened, in answer to our Lord's command, she awakened merely to that death condition in which she previously was.

To have resurrected her he would have meant to have lifted her completely out of death in every sense of the word, out of mental, moral and physical degradation, up to the grand heights of perfection of mind and body, as represented in the person of father Adam, and our Lord did nothing of this kind. He merely awakened her, leaving her upon the same plane of death on which she had been born, and had thus far lived for twelve years. The maiden will still have her opportunity of sharing in the general "resurrection by judg-

ments" or restitution during the Millennial age—unless at some subsequent time she accepted the Gospel of the Lord Jesus, and became one of his followers, a member of the church of this Gospel age; in which event she would, if faithful, be accounted worthy of a part in the chief or first resurrection to glory, honor and immortality. But the point we here make is merely that this lesson does not treat of her resurrection, but of her awakening.

In harmony with this is the plain statement of the Scriptures that our Lord Jesus himself, in his resurrection, was "the first fruits of them that slept." (1 Cor. 15:20) Again, the Apostle makes the same point very emphatic in his discourse to Agrippa, saying that all of his preaching was in harmony with the statements of Moses and the prophets: "That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead."—Acts 26:23.

These plain statements of Scripture cannot be ignored with impunity by those who desire to be taught of God, and to rid themselves of erroneous theories and speculations respecting the word resurrection. Our Lord's resurrection was indeed the first, and hence the others were not resurrections at all. Our Lord was raised up—clear up—all the way up—out of death—into the full perfection of life. It was not necessary that he should be raised to the perfection of human nature again, for indeed it was the human nature of Jesus that was sacrificed on our behalf—one sacrifice forever—which could never be taken back or rescinded—otherwise it would have meant the repeal of man's redemption—the undoing of the at-one-ment work.

Rather, we are to remember that when our Lord Jesus made his consecration at baptism he was "begotten of the spirit," a spirit being—and that which was begotten of the spirit was in due time "born of the spirit," a spirit being—and referring to this spirit birth, his resurrection, we read that he was "the first-born from the dead." "the first-born among many brethren." (Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:18) These are additional proof texts to the effect that neither Lazarus nor Jairus' daughter, nor the son of the widow of Nain, nor the young man whom the Apostle Paul awakened, nor Dorcas, whom Peter awakened, nor the child of the Shunnamite woman whom Elisha awakened, were "born from the dead" in any sense of the word, either on the fleshly or on the spiritual plane.

Let us, then, in thinking of our dear Redeemer's resurrection, seek more and more to grasp its greatness, and to realize that nothing of the kind ever occurred before, and that as he was the first-born from the dead, so his "brethren," the church, are to come next in order. Let us remember also that his resurrection to spirit nature is quite a different resurrection from what the world of mankind may ever hope to share—theirs being a restitution resurrection to human conditions, human perfection and life. The higher, chief, or first resurrection which our Lord experienced, is promised as a special reward to his faithful church and to no others. It is this that the Apostle calls the resurrection of the dead, which he describes in 1 Cor. 15:42-44. Our great endeavor, therefore, as followers in the footsteps of Jesus, should be the same that was before the mind of the great Apostle, when he said, "That I may know the power of his resurrection (the first resurrection, to spiritual conditions, glory, honor and immortality), and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death, if by any means I might attain unto the (special, chief) resurrection of the dead."—Phil. 3:9-15.

THE VOLUNTEER WORK

Since the sending forth of the double number of our journal last issue, the "Volunteer" enlistments have increased wonderfully. The dear friends of the truth everywhere seem to think that if this issue is to be the "ammunition" used by the Volunteers the results will be momentous; hence many are anxious to enlist in the service which promises nothing of earthly fame or reward, but large appreciation by the Captain of our salvation, and large rewards in the world to come.

There are probably as many as a hundred colored brethren on the Watch Tower lists, some of them very clear in the truth, and very earnest in its service, financially and otherwise. We have received letters from several of these, who had intended engaging in the volunteer work, expressing surprise that in the call for volunteers in the March 1st issue we restricted the inquiry to white Protestant churches. They rightly realized that we have not the slightest of race prejudice, and that we love the colored brethren with just the same warmth of heart that we love the white, and they queried

therefore why such a distinction should be made in the call. The reason is that so far as we are able to judge, colored people have less education than whites—many of them quite insufficient to permit them to profit by such reading as we have to give forth. Our conclusion therefore is based upon the supposition that reading matter distributed to a colored congregation would more than half of it be utterly wasted, and a very small percentage indeed likely to yield good results. We advise, therefore, that where the Watch Tower literature is introduced to colored people it be not by promiscuous circulation, but only to those who give evidence of some ear for the truth.

We avoid, so far as possible, putting the pearls of present truth into the hands of the vicious and depraved, whites as well as blacks. Wherever we have reason to believe that people love sin rather than righteousness, we have no desire to remove from their minds any of the shackles which ignorance and superstition have put upon them; rather, we would leave

them bound until, in the Millennial age, when these shackles shall all be removed, they will be under the strong hand of a strong governor, who will recompense every iniquity as well as every effort toward righteousness.

Similarly, the exclusion of Roman Catholic churches was not intended as any slight upon the people connected with them, for whom we have only the greatest good will and best wishes. Nor did it indicate that we thought none of the Roman Catholics amenable to the truth, for, on the contrary, there are quite a number of very zealous friends of the truth who were reared in Catholicism; indeed, only last Sunday (April 1st) at our meeting in the Bible House Chapel, four Roman Catholics made public profession of faith in the Redeemer and of full consecration to him, and symbolized it in water immersion. We excluded Roman Catholic churches from the Volunteer service because the vast majority of their attendants are either too ignorant or too bigoted to read and think for themselves. True, much of this would apply also to Protestants; but the percentage of hopefuls amongst the latter is so much greater as to justify, we think, the enormous expense involved in this circulation of free reading matter at the churches throughout this country.

* * *

The volunteer service is open to all of the Lord's dear people, brethren and sisters, white and colored, who have a desire thus to serve the great Captain of our salvation, and to help deliver their "brethren" from the bondage of Babylon into the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free from sectarianism, superstition and every yoke of bondage. Nor do we desire to place this service as a yoke or burden upon any, but as the word indicates, it is only for "volunteers." We believe that the Lord would not have any conscriptions or drafts connected with his service. As to whether or not this is a way in which you can serve the Lord's cause is not for us but for you to decide. We merely give you our opinion, that this is one of the best means of serving the truth—preaching the Gospel of the kingdom—breaking the chains of error that are upon the "brethren"—honoring the name and character of our heavenly Father, and extolling the great redemption accomplished by Jesus our Saviour. It is a "harvest" work, in that it is gathering to the Lord his true people,—gathering them out of the various sects—not into another sect, but into heart-union with the Lord and with all who are at one with him through oneness of spirit, engendered by love of the truth.

WRAPPERS ADDRESSED FOR SAMPLE TOWERS

We are expecting great results from the volunteer service this year, and those who engage in it to any degree will, we believe, look back with great pleasure to their share in it. But regardless of how much blessing may come to others by this service, we are convinced that great blessings are coming to the Lord's people, through the self-denial and cross-bearing which this volunteer service implies. The bringing of our hearts into such a condition of devotion to the Master means a spiritual blessing and a character-development which surely will be great aids in the attainment of the kingdom. However, to his own master each servant stands or falls, and we are to remember not to judge or offend one another, but rather to assist each other.

In harmony with this we are quite willing to co-operate with all the Lord's dear people in whichever of the various methods of serving the truth they may decide to be the most appropriate and best suited to their circumstances, conditions, zeal, etc. We will therefore not restrict this "ammunition" to the volunteer work at the churches, but will supply it freely to others, for use amongst their friends, or in any manner that they may be able to use it. For instance, some have already sent us in numerous addresses of persons whom they have reason to believe might be amenable to the influence of the truth, and others have gotten extras for loaning amongst their friends and neighbors. While these may not be strictly counted in amongst the volunteers, we may consider them a kind of sharpshooters and "guerillas."

Those who wish us to mail samples to their friends direct from our office should write the addresses on wrappers of about the same size we use in mailing the Watch Tower (12 by 8 inches—the address to be written lengthwise of the sheet, and about one and a half inches from the top), and these addressed wrappers should be mailed to us, a postal card accompanying them in explanation. The harvest is great, the

laborers are few comparatively, and the wages promised by the Master are enormous—"glory, honor and immortality" to the faithful.

* * *

Your success, and the kind of a reception you receive when circulating the truth, will in many instances depend largely upon your own manner. It is an old saying that "Like begets like," and if you go forth with your hearts full of love for the dear "brethren" whom you seek to serve, and if previous to starting you go on your knees to the Lord to ask his blessing upon yourselves, as his servants, and upon your effort in his service, praying for wisdom, grace and a fulness of his spirit of love, your manner will not be bold and blatant; but kind, courteous, humble, yet withal courageous, for you are there as a brother on the business of the Elder Brother, the King, and have nothing whatever to be ashamed of.

Your mission is both honorable and laudable. It is an appeal, not to the passions and prejudices of the people, but to their intellects and their hearts. This kind of preaching is as honorable as that done from the platform; yea, much more honorable, for many ministers are confessing in public from time to time, and to their shame, that for years they have been preaching, contrary to their consciences, a God-dishonoring, inconsistent, unreasonable and unscriptural message. They have been charging good round salaries for this falsification and defamation, while you, on the contrary, as a true minister of the Lord and the truth, not only serve to others "meat in due season" from the Master's table, but do it with good conscience, and without earthly reward or any hope of name or fame.

EFFECTUAL VOLUNTEER WORK

One dear brother, whose letter appears in this issue, had the "Dawn" in his possession, but was too prejudiced to study it, until he witnessed a "Volunteer distribution" at a church he attended, and saw amongst the Volunteers one whom he recognized as the head of a large mercantile business. He said to himself at once, "There is something real and tangible about the faith of these Christian people, and I must study the literature to find the basis of such self-denial and cross-bearing." He did investigate, and as a result is now a Volunteer himself. He is a man of college education, good natural ability, fills a fine position, and is not ashamed of the Lord, nor of the word of his grace, which has established his own heart and given him a faith and a hope beyond all compare. His present aspirations are, to be humble and faithful until death, and then to be a sharer, a joint-heir with the Lord in his Millennial kingdom, which shall bless the world.

In addition to meekness and love, manifested in look, in word and in act, we advise the dear volunteers to keep a reasonable distance away from church edifices whose congregations they seek to serve. A reasonable distance will, of course, depend somewhat upon circumstances. A quarter or a half block would not be too distant, if thereby the people could be well served. Of course, no one should take offense at a gratuitous distribution of spiritual food directly at the church door; yet experience shows that some do take offense at this, and feel as did the Pharisees of old respecting the Lord's message, when they asked, "Are we blind also?" It is well to avoid arousing prejudice. Our ammunition is not intended to wound, to hurt, to kill, but to do good, to comfort, to inspire with new Christian life and hope.

* * *

We have decided to discontinue the general volunteer circulation of the "Bible versus Evolution" pamphlet, and to use this volunteer number everywhere instead. Consequently all the new recruits to this volunteer service will be supplied with the new ammunition, and the various companies may get together at once and, through one of their number, appointed as secretary or lieutenant, communicate with us, informing us respecting the number of Protestant white churches, and so far as they may be able to judge, the average attendance at each, and the number of volunteers with their names. The Captain-General of our forces is the Lord Jesus, under whose banner alone we are enrolled, and whose cause alone we serve.

"From victory unto victory
His army shall he lead,
Till every foe is vanquished,
And Christ is Lord indeed."

A KIND MASTER, A GOOD SERVANT

LUKE 7:1-10.—APRIL 22.

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."—Psalm 103:13.

Masters and servants in the olden times occupied a much closer relationship to each other than they do today—a relationship which took on more of paternal sentiment. The change has been brought about gradually, and is not the result of great men of today having less heart than great men of the olden times, nor of employees being less faithful than employees of olden times: it is rather the result of changed conditions—the result of greater individuality and independence, which leads the employee to prefer to sell his time and energy on a strictly commercial basis rather than on a paternal basis. Nevertheless, the general influence is unfavorable in many respects: first, because men of great mental power and influence are to some extent under present arrangements cut off from fellowship and sympathy with their employees, and although the class distinctions are not less marked than in the past, nor even as much so, yet class rivalry and animosity is possibly greater than ever.

The employer, under present conditions, feels no responsibility for the employee, since he has made a bargain with him for so much money per day, without additional responsibilities, and the employee feels that having obtained the wage bargained for, and having used it according to his own will, he has no further claim upon his employer in case of sickness or other adversity. However, the system has its good features as well as its bad ones for it should cultivate independence, self-reliance and prudence; nevertheless, all discern that this division between the interests of masters and servants stands closely related to the great time of trouble which now impends.

The lesson of the healing of the centurion's servant at Capernaum strikingly illustrates the affectionate interest that prevailed between some good masters and their good servants in the past. True, we do not have any record that this servant was a good one, yet the inference is here, because the centurion himself was evidently an orderly man, and such men usually seek for and obtain orderly servants. Furthermore, in his conversation with our Lord he declares that he was accustomed to having his servants do what he bade them.—Verse 8.

The centurion himself was, of course, a Roman—not a Jew. He was, therefore, debarred in a general way from the Lord's blessings, which he declared on another occasion were for the children of the kingdom (Israelites) only, and not for strangers. No doubt because he realized himself as outside Judaism—an alien and a stranger, and foreigner from the covenants and blessings of God bestowed upon Israel. (Eph. 2:12), that he obtained the coöperation of the leading Jews of the city, that they would favor his cause with the Lord, and intercede that his petition might be granted.

We notice the good deeds of this centurion. He evidently respected the religion of the Jews, and had used his wealth in the building of a synagogue, the ruins of which are supposed to have been found recently. Of these ruins Edersheim says, "The remains now, after eighteen centuries, in their richness of elaborate carvings of cornices and tablets, of capitals and niches, show with what liberal hand he had dealt his votive offerings." It is presumed that this miracle preceded the awakening of Jairus' daughter, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that Jairus himself was one of the elders of the Jews who came to Jesus in the interest of the centurion; and this to some extent helps to account for his great faith in our Lord's power to revive his daughter, even though dead.

Our Lord seems to have readily granted the centurion's request; and the fact that it was not presented personally is presumed not to signify any lack of respect, but the very reverse, a realization on his part that Jews were averse to having any dealings with Gentiles, except along strictly business lines. His further modesty and meekness were manifest in the fact that before Jesus had reached his house he sent friends (not servants) to hinder Jesus from defiling himself by coming into a Gentile's house. For altho he was a man of influence and power, he realized the barrier between himself and the Jews, according to which the Pharisees would have considered that they defiled themselves by entering his house. He accordingly suggested that our Lord would merely speak the word, and that he had fullest confidence that the word could be spoken as well outside as inside the house—that one possessing

such power as the Lord Jesus manifested had agencies at his command which would not require him to personally see and touch the servant in order to heal him, even as the centurion himself was accustomed to perform various matters through the instrumentality of his servants.

This was a wonderful illustration, both of meekness and of faith, and it was appreciated by our Lord accordingly. There is a lesson in it for all of the Lord's people, to the effect that the more we exercise faith in the Lord along reasonable lines, in harmony with the teachings of his Word, the more he will be pleased with us. This same thing was illustrated in the case of Thomas, who, being absent at the time of our Lord's first appearance to the eleven, declared that nothing would satisfy him respecting the Lord's resurrection except the putting of his fingers into the nail-prints of his hands. Our Lord, while granting him the demonstration which he asked, intimated that he would have had a greater blessing if he could have exercised a greater faith, saying, "(More) blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

Let all of the Lord's people remember this, and instead of doubting the Lord's willingness to perform what he has promised, and requiring signs and further evidences and assurances, let us rather rest content that he who has so graciously done for us in the past more than we could have asked or thought is equally faithful today, and will fulfill to us all the good promises of his Word. The more heartily we shall accept his promises, the more fully we shall trust to his gracious providences, the more peace of heart we shall have ourselves, and the more the Lord will delight himself in us as his servants—and brethren, and the more he will be pleased to favor us and to use us.

Our Lord's remark: "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel," was a grand tribute of approval for the Gentile centurion. It distinctly indicates that the fact that the Lord's favor which for over eighteen hundred years had been confined to Israel was not merely because the Israelites were alone worthy, nor because in them alone was found such faith as that on account of which father Abraham was blessed, and the blessing pronounced on his children. But altho the Lord found greater faith in the centurion than amongst others in Israel, nevertheless he could not and did not invite the centurion to become one of his disciples, because "the gifts and callings of God are not things to be repented of," and the divine favor to Israelites must and did continue down to the full end of the "seventy weeks" of favor promised through Daniel, the prophet—altho the national favor ceased three and a half years sooner, in the midst of the seventieth week, five days before our Lord's crucifixion, when he said of that nation, "Your house is left unto you desolate; ye shall see me no more until that day."—Matt. 23:38; Dan. 9:24.

It is certainly within the range of possibility that this centurion, whose good works and alms were so highly commended by the Jews, and whose faith was so highly spoken of by our Lord, might have been removed by Roman authority from Capernaum to Cæsarea, another fortress, and that he may have been the centurion named Cornelius, the first Gentile accepted to the privileges and favors of the Gospel church, at the expiration of the "seventy weeks" of favor confined to the Israelites.—Acts 10:1-35.

One lesson connected with this subject which should specially commend itself to any of the Lord's people who are masters or employers is the lesson of kindness for servants. If a Gentile would be so careful for the interests of his servant, and thus bestir and trouble himself much to secure his release from pain, much more should every true Christian not only feel a kindliness for those who are of the household of faith but also be disposed to do good unto all men as they may have opportunity. We may be sure that all such evidences of interest in fellow-creatures, all such evidences of the spirit of love and kindness, are pleasing in the Lord's sight; and not only so, but that every time we exercise ourselves along such lines we deepen them and strengthen, confirm and establish character along the lines of love and mercy. This is one of the ways in which we are to develop ourselves more and more as copies of God's dear Son.—Rom. 8:29.

THE DISAPPOINTED PROPHET'S WISE COURSE

LUKE 7:18-28.—APRIL 29.

"He hath done all things well."—Mark 7:37.

While Jesus was performing many miracles, making numerous disciples, and meeting with comparatively little opposition, things were going very differently with his cousin,

John the Baptist. Yet this was only in accordance with what John himself had prophesied, saying, "He must increase, but I must decrease." John was in prison, about 120 miles

from where Jesus was laboring so successfully. To be shut up in a dark dungeon of the kind usual at that time, and to have our Lord proceeding with his work, and raising no voice of protest on his behalf, and exercising none of his mighty power for his deliverance, probably seemed very strange to John—especially in view of his expectations respecting the work of the Messiah—that he would be a great earthly general and king, in harmony with the general Jewish expectations.

We see how readily John might have permitted doubts and fears to enter his mind. He might have said, This whole matter is a fraud, and Jesus and I have been deceiving ourselves. He might have lost all faith in God's providential dealings in the past, and all heart and hope for the present and for the future; but notwithstanding the great disappointment he felt, his faith continued its firm hold on the Lord. This is indicated in his sending of his disciples to Jesus, to make inquiry, and also in the character of the inquiry. He does not say, Is this whole matter a farce, and are we deluded? but on the contrary his question was a sound one, and expresses the conviction that thus far the Lord has been leading, and that the only doubt in the prophet's mind was whether or not, as he was the forerunner of Jesus, Jesus in turn, greater than he, might be the forerunner of some one else still greater and yet to come. And strictly speaking, this was exactly the case; for Jesus in the flesh was indeed the forerunner and preparer of the way before the still greater glorified Christ of the second advent, who will accomplish the great and wonderful things foretold by all the holy prophets since the world began.—Acts 3:21-23.

Our Lord, it will be noticed, did not answer John's question directly—he did not say that there was not another coming and still greater work than that which he was performing, but he did give John to understand distinctly that the work he was then doing was the very work which had been foretold in the prophets, and the proper thing to be done at that time. While John's messengers were with Jesus a number of miracles were performed in their sight, and Jesus sent them back to John with instructions that they bear witness to him of the work of the Lord progressing in his hands, and to say to John that while the opportunities to stumble at Jesus, his work and his words, were many, and while many would stumble at these, as the prophet had declared (Isa. 8:14) yet a special blessing would rest upon all who would not stumble, but whose faith in the Lord would continue, despite various disappointments of expectation respecting his work and their fulfillments—through misapprehension of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine plan, which, as the heavens are higher than the earth, were higher than human conception could have foreseen. For instance, what Jew could have thought for a moment of the still higher than Jewish expectations of the kingdom—of the spiritual kingdom-class to be selected first before the establishment of the earthly kingdom, and to be sharers with Messiah in his glory, honor and immortality?

All of the Lord's faithful servants need to remember the same lessons which were thus forcefully impressed upon John: they need to remember that when sometimes matters turn out very differently with themselves than what they had expected, when they receive injuries, reproaches and oppression, as the rewards of faithfulness to duty and to truth, it does not mean that God has forgotten them, nor that they were misled in their previous service to the Lord; nor does it mean that the Lord has changed his plan; nor that he is careless or indifferent respecting their condition. True, their first thought should be whether or not present unfavorable conditions are in the nature of chastisements or the results of any misdoings on their part, or failures to serve the Lord in his own way, but if they find their course to be harmonious with the divine will and Word they should at once rest their faith upon the Lord, and conclude that God knows better than they how to manage his own work. Then while thankful to be used in that work for a time they should nevertheless be pleased, if it were the Lord's will, to be set aside for a time—perhaps for the good of others, or perhaps for their own training in the school of experience and in the learning of lessons of patience and of faith.

But such a resting in the Lord, such a centering of life in him, can be enjoyed only by those who have made considerable progress, who have run a considerable distance in the way of the Lord, and who have already been exercised under the Lord's providences, and have learned many lessons in his school. This, however, is the condition which all of the Lord's true followers are to strive to attain, as the only one thoroughly pleasing to the Lord. The proper course of all God's servants when perplexed is the one followed by John, namely, to go to the Lord with the perplexity—not doubtingly, but

inquiringly—and be set at rest by his Word. We may not be able to hear the Lord's words with our own ears, but we can receive it second hand as did John—through the testimonies of the apostles and prophets, by whose writings God has provided in advance replies to all proper queries.

The question arises, Was John imprisoned on account of officiousness—on account of trying to mind Herod's business? Or was he imprisoned because of his faithfulness in the discharge of that duty? Was it right or was it wrong for him to reprove the king, and to say to him that it was not lawful for him to take as his wife his brother Philip's wife? There is no question that Herod was in the wrong, and that John's expression on the subject was a correct one, and that Herod was living in adultery, but the question is, Was this any of John's business? Did he need to meddle with the king's affairs, and thus get himself into trouble? And if it was John's duty to reprove Herod on this subject, was it not the duty of our Lord Jesus to have done the same, and in addition to have uttered a protest against the imprisonment of John, and in general to have raised a great hubbub over the injustice being done by the wicked ruler? And if John was right in this matter was our Lord Jesus wrong in not following the same course? Or if Jesus was right in not following John's course in reproving Herod, does it prove that John erred in giving the reproof?

We answer that our Lord's conduct is certainly to be considered as above reproach, since "in him was no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth;" but this does not prove guile and sin on John's part in following a different course. We are to remember that in many respects John and his ministry differed widely from our Lord and his ministry. For instance, the uncouth skin-girdle which John wore was very different from the seamless robe which the Lord wore; and the Scriptures call attention to the fact that John lived a very abstemious life, "neither eating nor drinking" ordinary food, but practicing a continual fasting or self-denial as respects these comforts, while our Lord Jesus came "both eating and drinking," attended wedding feasts and banquets made in his honor. The lesson is that these grand characters each fulfilled his own mission, according to the divine arrangement, but that they had different missions. John's mission was pre-eminently that of a reprovor and reformer, and we are to understand that as a prophet he was supernaturally guided in respect to the various features of the course which he took. Our Lord's mission, on the contrary, was a different one; he was gathering to himself those whom John's ministry served to arouse to righteousness and to zeal to know and do the Lord's will.

We who are called to be the "body" of Christ and to follow him, may learn a lesson in this as respects our proper course: we are not sent forth as John was, to dwell in the wilderness, living and dressing uncouthly, and to criticise and denounce everything and everybody. Some of the Lord's dear people fail to notice that such commissions are special and very rare, and sometimes in following the wrong copy, undesignedly bring reproach upon the Lord's cause. We are to be copies of God's dear Son, our Lord, and not to be copies of John the Baptist. We are not to stir up strife by trying to mind other people's business, nor to seek to govern all the affairs of this world, reproving emperors, kings, governors, etc., but to the contrary of this are exhorted by the Apostle to remember that what God sees fit to permit we can see fit to endure.

Even tho we find many things which we cannot commend or indorse, we may equally find ourselves able to avoid any special denunciation of them—especially of things which have no bearing whatever upon the proper understanding and fulfilling of the Lord's Word. The Apostle points out our proper position, saying, "As much as lieth in you live peaceably with all men." And our Lord emphasized the same thought, saying, "Blessed are the peacemakers; they shall be called the children of God."

Some of the holiest of the Lord's people err on this subject in their own families, and needlessly arouse prejudice and opposition, and make their homes unhappy, by continually finding fault with things which tho not up to the standard of saintliness and cross-bearing, are nevertheless not immoral or wicked even in tendency. Parents and guardians are surely to guard against all tendencies toward immorality, etc., but to find fault with those they love merely because they are only nominal Christians and have the spirit of worldliness, is certainly unwise. Their general life of peace and joy in the holy Spirit is the very best reproof of worldliness they can give and the best recommendation of the glorious gospel they profess. This is the epistle that will be read, the light that will reprove darkness. In other words, we must not expect from nor try to force upon the unconsecrated the details of our own self-denials. We must wait until they shall see full conse