

things appearing in THE TOWER can be reread and studied with much profit.

We are sure, beloved Brother, that none could minister such things except he had the experience of such a ministry.

Thanking you for your ministry of love, and praying the Father's continued blessing upon you in such a ministry, I remain with much love,

Your Brother by His grace,

W. M. BATTERSON.

VOL. XXXVII

BROOKLYN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1916

No. 5

## TREASURES LAID UP IN HEAVEN

*"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for where your treasure is there will your heart be also."—Matthew 6:19-21.*

Pleasure, delight, joy, comfort, all these sentiments are suggested to us by the word treasure. Our thoughts, our hopes, our plans, center there. Our treasure is the inspiration of our lives, the incentive to energy, perseverance and endurance, for the hope which it enkindles. Most people have treasures, but they are generally such as yield slight satisfaction, because they are transitory and disappointing. How many have built their hopes upon earthly things only to find them but illusive bubbles mocking delusions, leaving the heart at last broken, crushed and barren! The treasures of wealth, fame, social distinction, of houses and lands, of friends and home and family, of power and influence, are subject to change and decay! And if the heart be centered in them, they are liable in a moment to be swept away, leaving the life desolate and despairing, all the more so because of the high hopes which they had inspired.

The wealth, laboriously gathered and husbanded with great care, may vanish in a night. The fame so dearly won may change to censure and reproach at the caprice of fickle public sentiment. The social prestige which bade you to the uppermost seats may a little later relegate you to the lowest seat, and your name may be cast out as evil and you be ostracized. Houses and lands and carefully hoarded belongings may disappear under the sheriff's hammer. Friends long trusted may suddenly grow cold and turn their backs upon you, and even become your enemies. The home you love must some time break up, the family be scattered or invaded by death. The love that glows upon the home altar may flicker and become dim or extinct. How many have found the high hopes of youth and early life turn to ashes in a few short years or months!

### THE BALM OF GILEAD FOR BROKEN HEARTS

To all of these the Word of the Lord should appeal with special force, when calling them to come to him with their burdens and their broken hearts. "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." (Psalm 34:18) His love and his precious promises come like the sweet balm of Gilead to those who, sad and disappointed in the struggle of life, come to Christ for rest and comfort, for life and healing. Many storm-tossed mariners upon life's ocean, discouraged and despairing, bereft of all hope, have found that these very experiences were the means of leading them to the haven of eternal refuge. There alone true blessing and safety can be found; there alone is the real treasure, far exceeding the choicest treasures of earth.

We think of the experience of a dear brother who recently found the Lord, when his earthly treasures had been swept away from him, all the savings of years, through conditions brought about because of the European war. He had lost all hope and was about to end his life by his own hand, when present truth was brought to his attention. He listened, then embraced it with joy, securing the SCRIPTURE STUDIES. Afterward he stated that he now knew why the Lord had permitted him to meet with such reverses—it was to lead him to himself. How this dear one can now rejoice in his sorrowful experiences and realize that he has gained in exchange the "Pearl of great price," beside which all other treasures pale into insignificance!

Truly, in this our day, as never before perhaps, would all who have the spirit of a sound mind to any degree to be longing for a treasure which will be secure, a rock upon which they may plant their feet, one which will securely hold in these days of stress and uncertainty, when men feel that everything is slipping from beneath their feet, when nothing earthly is sure, when fear with distress is on every hand. At such a time as this, how blest are we who are safe-sheltered in the cleft of the Rock of Ages, which cannot be shaken by the mightiest earthquake shock! How unspeakably precious is the treasure which we have laid up in heaven; for we know our treasure is safe, where no storms nor billows can touch it.

### THE TREASURES WE LAY UP IN HEAVEN

The all-important question for those who seek this great treasure then is, How can we lay up treasure in heaven, and what kind of treasures are those which are to be stored up in the heavenly depository? We have the assurance of the divine Word that everything that is pure, holy and good is acceptable there. The very chiefest of all treasures is the personal love and friendship of God and of Christ. Jesus becomes to us "the fairest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely." He is an unfailing Refuge in every time of need, our daily joy and solace and comfort.

When we have gained this treasure, we have gained the One that never changes, One whose love never grows cold, One from whom nothing can separate us—"neither death," which to his loved ones will now mean our blessed "change"; "nor life," which means further opportunities for suffering with him that we may also share his glory, and which permits further works of loving service for him whom we love; "nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers," for these cannot harm us who are sheltered in Christ; "nor things present, nor things to come"; for "all things shall work together for our good," and in every trial he will direct the issue that we may be able to bear it; "nor height" of temporary exaltation; "nor depth" of trouble or sorrow, for our Refuge and Strength is ever near; "nor any other thing" in creation, for he has promised to "keep the feet of his saints," and that nothing shall touch them as new creatures in Christ, and that his presence shall go with them wherever they may be.—Romans 8:35-39; 1 Samuel 2:9; Luke 10:19; Exodus 33:14.

Nor will any other creatures either in heaven or in earth receive such marks of special favor as are and ever will be the portion of the beloved bride of Christ. Although the whole family in heaven and in earth will be blessed through him, his wife, co-operating with him in his work, will alone be his companion, his confidante, his treasure. Hear the Lord's exhortation to the bride class: "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear. Forget also thine own people and thy father's house [the ambitions, hopes and aims of the children of Adam]; so shall the King [Jehovah's Anointed] greatly desire thy beauty [beauty of character, of heart-loyalty]; for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him." (Psalm 45:10, 11; Canticles 4) How unworthy we feel of so great honor and love from our beloved Bridegroom! And no wonder! When we look at all our imperfections, it seems that there is little in us to call forth such love and admiration. To think that the angels with all their purity and faithfulness should have been passed by; and that we poor, blemished mortals, should be chosen instead!

Is there not some mistake? Ah, no! We have the infallible words of inspiration to assure us that it is even so. This bride of Jehovah's Son is to reign with him in the future over a fallen race; and who could so well sympathize with them in all their weaknesses and frailties as those who have themselves partaken of the same? And who could bear the infinite heights of glory to which the Lamb's wife will be raised, with such humility as those who realize that it was not through any worthiness of their own that they were chosen to so high an exaltation, but that it was all of divine grace? Clad in the glorious robe of our Bridegroom's furnishing, we can stand all complete, even now, in the eyes of Jehovah. And possessing the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, the faith that trusts under every condition, the love that delights to do the Father's will, we are lovely in the eyes of our Beloved, our Bridegroom and our King.

Having this confidence, we can with unspeakable joy and gratitude lay hold of the exceeding great and precious promises which are ours through Christ, and without presumption press along the line toward the prize of our high calling, humbly trusting that he who has begun the good work in us will complete it unto the day of our glorification with our Bridegroom in the heavenly kingdom, when we shall be pre-

sented before the Father "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing," gloriously complete and perfect, in the most absolute sense, fitted and prepared for the wonderful work which we shall share with our blessed Lord and King.

#### INCENTIVES TO FAITHFULNESS

Listen to some of the blessed and inspiring promises with which the Father and the Son cheer the bride: "Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty." Ye "shall be mine, in that day when I make up my jewels." "I will give thee to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give thee a white stone [a precious token of love], and in the stone a new name written [the name of our Bridegroom, henceforth to be our name] which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." "Lo, I am with you alway." "And if I go away, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also [and he has come, he is even now present, and will soon receive us unto himself forevermore]." "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne."—Isaiah 33:17; Malachi 3:17; Revelation 2:17; Matthew 28:20; John 14:3; 15:16; Revelation 2:10; 3:21.

Precious promises are these, wonderful words of life! Let us count them over and over again, that all their sweet significance may sink deep into our hearts and bring forth their blessed fruitage in our lives. May they cheer us in every dark and trying hour and reinforce our waning powers with renewed vigor, courage and zeal, that we may press along the narrow way until indeed our "eyes shall see the King in his beauty." What wondrous treasures do we thus find laid up in heaven for us, because we have left the world and all its delusive fancies and aspirations and have laid hold upon the things eternal! And while this glorious inheritance is to be the possession of all the faithful, the Apostle intimates clearly that our heavenly treasure may be augmented by special zeal and faithfulness under the peculiar trials of the present time.

One of the treasures which we may lay up in heaven will be the marks of just approval and distinction among the good and holy beyond the veil, which patient endurance of affliction, unwavering trust under crucial trials and testings, diligence in the King's business, will secure to us. Treasures of mind and character, too, we shall find laid up in heaven; for nothing that is good and true and worthy of preservation shall be lost to those who have committed their investments to the Lord. These are incorruptible treasures, which neither the lapse of time nor the exigencies of circumstances will ever wrest from us.

Other treasures will be all the true and noble friendships

which have been founded in truth and righteousness here on earth, whether they be on the spiritual or on the natural plane. For instance, one on the spiritual plane will not be disposed to forget or ignore the loving loyalty of a former friend, who from time to time administered the cup of cold water to the thirsty soul battling with the heat and dust of life's desert way, and who did this because the one ministered to was a disciple of Christ.

But especially sweet will be the spiritual friendships begun and cherished here, which will bloom and blossom in still greater vigor when transplanted into heavenly soil and atmosphere. And what a treasure we shall find in the gratitude and love of those to whom we have ministered here in times of special need, and to whom we have carried the living water and broken the Bread of Life! Who can measure the joy unspeakable that shall be the heritage of the faithful when we shall find all these precious treasures beyond the veil! When we view these treasures with unclouded eyes, and realize that they are ours forever; shall we not feel infinitely repaid for any sufferings and hardships we have borne in our brief earthly pilgrimage?

#### HEAVENLY PILGRIMS NEARING HOME

Then, dear brethren and sisters in Christ, let us keep our eyes steadfastly set upon the heavenly, eternal things. Let us more and more lay up treasures where "moth and rust cannot corrupt and where thieves cannot break through and steal." (Matthew 6:20) If our hearts are upon the heavenly treasures, then the disappointments and afflictions of the present life cannot overwhelm us. Whatsoever things are worthy the aspiration of the spiritual sons of God are our real treasures, and they are the only things that are worth while. What care we for the illusive bubbles of this poor life, so soon to burst and disappear? Then, as sings the poet:

"Let us touch lightly the things of this earth,  
Esteeming them only of trifling worth,"

not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us, if we faint not by the way, but with our pilgrim's staff in hand shall press along the heavenly road until we reach the goal of our hopes.

As the sun sinks at the close of each day, and the shadows gather around us, how sweet to sing, "I'm one day nearer home!" We have nearly reached the mountain-top, and every day multiplies the evidences that the journey is nearing its end. Just how long it will be we cannot know; probably it is best that we do not know. But we believe that it will not be very long.

## THE SECOND EPISTLE OF ST. PETER

*"The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."*—2 Peter 3:10.

While those of our number who have been for some time familiar with present truth well know the presentations which St. Peter gives in this general letter to the church, it is well that we frequently have our pure minds stirred up by way of remembrance concerning these important things, "lest at any time we should let them slip."—2 Peter 3:1, 2; Hebrews 2:1.

In this Epistle the Apostle is urging upon the whole church the importance of developing the fruits of the holy Spirit. Then he reminds them of the vision of the coming kingdom which he himself and St. James and St. John saw in the holy mount. He points out the need that careful attention be given to the study of prophecy. He warns them of the false teachers who will be manifested among them. He reminds them of the condemnation and overthrow that came to the angels who turned from obedience to God, of the catastrophe that befell Sodom and Gomorrah because of their corruption, of the destruction of the ungodly in the great Deluge, of the perverse and wicked course of Balaam the prophet, and its consequences. Then he charges that some of them were following his course, and next he discusses the fact that things will not always continue as they have been; that evil shall not always triumph; but that a great change impends, which will be the introduction of a new feature of the divine plan; namely, the establishment of God's Kingdom upon earth.

St. Peter indicates that this great change will come very suddenly—a radical change such as came in the days of Noah, a very sudden catastrophe, the coming of which will be scoffed at by those having a form of godliness without its power. (2 Peter 3:3, 4) This catastrophe he pictures as a great conflagration. The "heavens" will take fire and be consumed. Then

the "earth" will take fire and be burned up. The "elements" will all dissolve with the fervency of the heat.

#### THE FIRE A NEEDFUL PREPARATION FOR THE KINGDOM

In reading this prophecy the majority of Christian people seem to think that there will be a literal burning up of the material heavens and earth. But, as we have pointed out for many years, we think that there is a more logical explanation of this prophecy, and that its fulfilment has already begun. This great time of trouble, which follows closely the second coming of Christ, will be an experience the like of which never was since there was a nation. (Daniel 12:1) In one figure the Scriptures liken it to a great tidal wave, carrying the mountains into the midst of the sea. (Psalm 46) This pictures the governments of earth as being overwhelmed, swallowed up, by the raging sea of human passion when the masses become fully aroused. In another figure it is depicted as a mighty "whirlwind" sweeping everything before it. In a third figure it is compared to the letting loose of the "four winds of the earth," "the four winds of the heavens"; in still another picture it is a great "fire." (Isaiah 66:15; Jeremiah 4:13; 23:19, 20; 30:23, 24; 1 Kings 19:11, 12; Revelation 7:1-3; Daniel 7:2; Zephaniah 3:8, etc.) The whole earth is to be devoured by the fire of God's jealousy, the fire of God's righteous anger. The fire of God's anger no more means a literal fire than does the expression a fiery horse. It is the fire of God's wrath against sin that is being manifested at this time and will continue.

We are to remember that the second coming of our Lord is to bring a time of refreshing and of restitution to all mankind (Acts 3:19-21); and we must interpret these symbols

denoting trouble in harmony with this Scriptural declaration. The word "heavens" is a figurative term for the present religious institutions—ecclesiasticism. The fire will extend to the social structure, the social order of things. The social, political, financial and ecclesiastical systems together make up our present order. The ecclesiastical systems will, be believe, go into destruction first, according to the Bible. The fire will next affect the social and industrial organization—merchandise, capital and labor, society, etc. It will devour the capitalistic elements, the banking elements, the political elements, the religious elements, the industrial elements. All these will be "melted," "dissolved"—they will separate, part company, fail to keep together, and will be swept away.

If this great cataclysm of trouble were all we had to which to look forward, we would think it the course of wisdom to say nothing about it. We would say, Do not think about it or speak of it; for it will be had enough when it comes. But when the Bible tells us that the great trouble is designed merely to sweep away these outgrown religious systems, social systems, political systems, etc., and that God will on the wreck of all these things establish the kingdom of Messiah for the world's blessing, then we are glad of the trouble, and see that it is the necessary thing. This knowledge would be a great comfort and relief of mind to many bewildered ones who see the trouble coming on with increasing momentum, yet who cannot see the ultimate good to result, who feel that revolution and anarchy are confronting the entire world, but see not the golden lining to the black clouds of trouble.

The principle of disintegration and reconstruction is constantly operating in nature. The rocks are disintegrating; and this process keeps the soil enriched and promotes vegetable growth. Animal and vegetable organisms are continually disintegrating, and furnishing elements for new formations, new organisms. There will have to be a thorough breaking up of the fallow ground of men's hearts, and a thorough disintegration of present arrangements before the seed of truth can be planted that will bring forth the fruitage of the new dispensation. During this Gospel age God has been guiding those who have already been disintegrated, and who are yielding themselves to his reconstructive processes. The world will need this great time of trouble. They are not in the attitude of the class who are now seeking God and endeavoring to do his will. If we had the power to shield any of our worldly friends from this trouble, we believe that by so shielding them we would be doing them a real injury instead of good.

#### PROPER ATTITUDE OF THE SAINTS

God's dealings with the world in this time will be the work of a skilful surgeon, who wounds to heal, whose knife must go down to the depths of the abscess that would otherwise take the life of the patient. The Lord intimates that during this time of trouble those who shall seek righteousness and meekness may have at least a measure of protection granted them. (Zephaniah 2:2, 3) But as for those who are not seeking after righteousness and meekness, it will be better for them to go through the trouble, in order to prepare them for the great blessing to come later. The Apostle's argument is that the

present order of things is not satisfactory to anybody who has the right attitude of heart.

The long foretold time of trouble, such as never was and never will be again (Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21, 22), has begun. Daily the heat of human passion is growing more intense. In view of this approaching dissolution, now at the very door, what should be our attitude of heart? What should be the course of those who are prospective citizens of the great government about to be established, which will control the affairs of earth under the headship of Christ Jesus, earth's rightful King? We should remember that in order to become of the kingdom class which is to have the rulership of earth for a thousand years, we must be separate from the aims, ambitions and policy of the present order. One of the essentials is that we recognize the vast difference between the present order of things and the new order now at hand, and that we take our stand accordingly. In the meantime, we should do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the Household of Faith, our brethren in Christ.

As loyal children of the Great King of the universe, who is now about to inaugurate his kingdom in the hands of his Son, we pray, "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven." We rejoice in the evidence which we see all about us that our prayers for this kingdom are now to be answered. Meantime we must live in harmony with this prayer. As St. Peter reminds us, "What manner of persons ought we to be," in all holiness of life, in separateness from the world! The Apostle puts this solemn question right home to us. It is applicable now as never before.

Let us lay these precious words to heart; for we stand in the very presence of the Great Judge of all the earth. These exhortations and encouragements, which were primarily addressed to the church who lived over eighteen hundred years ago, and which have served a purpose of good all along down this Gospel age, are especially meant by the spirit for those of the church who are living in this very day of God. How favored are these above all the people of the world and above the masses of professed followers of Christ, who have not this knowledge!

The Apostle's words near the close of his Epistle, should be of special comfort and cheer to us now, in this brief waiting time since the close of Gentile Times. He says, "And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation." (2 Peter 3:15) How glad of this little extended time some of the Lord's dear ones are, who have come into the knowledge of present truth and consecrated themselves to God since October, 1914! And how glad are many of Christ's followers who have longer known of these precious truths, that the Lord has mercifully granted them a little further time to make their calling and election sure! Perhaps some of these were not ready when the Gentile Times closed.

"Wherefore, brethren, seeing that ye look for these things [the overthrow of the existing order and the establishment of the glorious kingdom of God's dear Son], be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless"; for our Lord "is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy . . . Amen."—2 Peter 3:14; Jude 24, 25.

## PHILIP AND THE ETHIOPIAN

[This article was a reprint of that entitled "God's Providences Co-operate" published in issue of March 1, 1902, which please see.]

## THE GREAT MULTITUDE

MARCH 26.—REVELATION 7:9-17.

CHRISTIANS OF THREE KINDS—"TARES," OR FALSE CHRISTIANS—SAINTS, A LITTLE FLOCK OF SELF-SACRIFICERS—AVERAGE CHRISTIANS, A GREAT MULTITUDE—THEIR DESTINY SHOWN IN THIS LESSON—HOW THEY WILL BE CONQUERORS—THE OTHERS WHO WILL BE "MORE THAN CONQUERORS"—CONTRASTS OF THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE—PRIESTS AND LEVITES FOR THE COMING AGE—THE NUMBERS OF THE FORMER KNOWN, THAT OF THE LATTER NOT KNOWN.

*"They shall hunger no more; . . . and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."*—Revelation 7:16, 17.

According to the Bible those professing the name of Christ are of three general classes. It is not ours to read their hearts; but it is ours, as Jesus said, to know them by their fruits. Yet even here we might deceive ourselves. The only safe way for us, therefore, in respect to persons who claim to be Christians and who live an upright and moral life is to take them for what they profess to be. One of these classes Jesus styles tares—"children of the wicked one"—because their presence in the church is the result of false doctrines, false teachings, sown by the adversary, Satan. (Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43) Many tares, we understand, are very talented, very honorable, and very wealthy. They really, however, have neither part nor lot with the true church of Christ, all of whose members are spirit-begotten through the Word of Truth.

In the sense that the consecrated are all called in the one hope of their calling and all begotten of the one spirit through

the one Word of Truth, they are one class, one church, under one Lord, one faith, one baptism. (Ephesians 4:4, 5) Their division into two classes is the result of coldness, lukewarmness, fear to perform the sacrifice contracted, fear of death, on the part of some—the "great multitude" referred to in this lesson. The Apostle describes them, saying, "Through fear of death they are all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Hebrews 2:15) Some of them fear also loss of business or name or fame or social standing. Therefore they compromise with the world and its spirit. They do not deny the Lord. Indeed, many of them would die rather than directly deny him. Yet by their works they do deny him—ashamed of the truth because it is not popular, or ashamed of the Lord's brethren because of their humble position or their unpopularity among the worldly.

While this class do not deny the Lord's name, yet they fail

to walk closely in his footsteps, and therefore will fail to get the glorious prize of this Gospel age; namely, glory, honor, immortality, joint-heirship with Jesus in his Millennial kingdom, etc. Those great blessings and favors are to be granted only to the "more than conquerors"—the little flock, to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom—those who "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth," rejoicing in tribulation, esteeming it an honor to be counted worthy to suffer for Christ, his cause, his Word, his brethren. And yet this little flock, styled in the Bible the Lord's jewels, are described by the poet, who says:

"Those whom God makes His kings and priests  
Are poor in human eyes."

#### THE TWO CLASSES CONTRASTED

The Great Company described in our lesson will be overcomers; else they would never get any part in the everlasting blessings which the Lord is about to dispense now, at his second advent, when all of his faithful will be received to the heavenly home, the Father's House. They will be overcomers, or conquerors, in the end because the Lord will help them through by forcing those of this class who will be living in the end of the present age to come to a positive decision—to banish their fears and courageously count not their lives dear unto them in the great tribulation with which this age will end. The fact that when the test does come, when the crisis is reached, these will die rather than deny the Lord will constitute them overcomers and secure for them the blessing described in our text.

Nevertheless, there is a still higher position that will be attained by some. As it was not necessary for Jesus to be forced by tribulation either to acknowledge the heavenly Father and stand for truth or else to die the second death, so there is a class in the church who are like the Master and who will have similar experiences to his. These are styled "more than conquerors" because they not only do the right thing—stand for truth, righteousness and the divine arrangement—but they do it as Jesus did—voluntarily, with hearty good will, as soon as it is shown to them.

Here then, we see the difference between two classes in the church, all of whom are spirit-begotten, all of whom are called with the same high calling, all of whom had similar opportunities for attaining the great prize. The "more than overcomers," copies of God's dear Son, faithful unto death in their voluntary laying down of their lives in God's service and in behalf of the brethren—these will be the little flock to inherit the kingdom—these will be the royal priesthood—these will constitute the bride, the Lamb's wife and Joint-heir.

#### SCRIPTURES RELATING TO THE SECOND CLASS

The Great Company of this lesson are to be found everywhere. They fail to become members of the body of Christ, fail to get the great reward, fail to become kings and priests. They will be granted a blessing, however, but an inferior position, which will correspond to that of the Levites of old, who were not priests, but of the priestly tribe—servants to their brethren the priesthood. Again, they are represented in the Bible as not being worthy to be of the bride class, but as being granted the great honor of being "the virgins, her companions, who follow her"—bridesmaids.—Psalm 45:14, 15.

This class is also represented in the Lord's parable as the foolish virgins. (Matthew 25:1-13) They were virgins—pure, justified; hence they were fully consecrated to the Lord. But they were foolish in that they permitted the things of the present life to balance against the things of the life to come,

to which they had made a full consecration. The wise virgins go in with the Bridegroom, become the bride class, when the marriage of the Lamb takes place at the second coming of Christ. But the foolish virgins do not gain admittance, and they hear the Master's words, "I do not recognize you." But although they cannot be recognized as the bride class, we praise God for his mercy in indicating that they all belong to the company of virgins, the bride's companions who follow after her.

A beautiful picture of this is given us in Revelation 19:6-9. There also we are told of the Great Company who will praise God eventually that the marriage of the Lamb is come and his wife hath made herself ready—even though they will not be part of that bride class. Awakened from their slumber and stupor, and separated from Babylon the Great by its fire, these finally recognize what they have missed; but they thank God that his plan, so full of blessings, will still be carried out, though the true bride class have gone before. Then the Lord gives to them the precious message, "Blessed are they who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb." But they can go to that marriage supper only through much tribulation, which will test to the last their full devotion to the Lord—even unto death.

In Psalm 45 we have a picture of the heavenly Father as the Great King, the Lord Jesus as the King's Son, the church as the bride, and the great company as the virgins, the bride's companions, but one full of comfort and encouragement to all.

#### TWO COMPANIES—TWO REWARDS

In the account of today's lesson these are spoken of as a "great multitude whom no man can number"—a poor translation, better rendered, "a great company whose number no man knows." We do know the number of the elect, the "more than conquerors." It is stated to be one hundred and forty-four thousand of those who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth—a little flock indeed, as compared with the millions of earth for eighteen centuries, but a very choice company. The great company is not a foreordained number. No one can say what their number is; for they are castaways from the high calling, rescued by the mercy of God through Christ, because they have not denied his name, because at heart they were loyal, even though they failed to manifest a sufficiency of zeal in performing the covenant of sacrifice which they covenanted and on the terms of which they had been accepted into the Lord's family.

St. John says that theirs is a position of glory and honor, not in the throne with the bride, but before the throne, as those who are subject. He sees them not wearing crowns, the highest insignia of victory, which goes only to the "more than conquerors." But he sees them victors, nevertheless, with palm branches. Then he heard the statement that they were not members of the Temple class, but servants of the Temple, who serve God in his Temple. Great will be their blessing. The Lord will lead them to the waters of life. But they will not be, like the bride, possessed of immortality—which the Lord describes as water of life springing up in his people. (John 4:14; 7:37-39) The water of life which Jesus will give the second class will be everlasting life on the spirit plane like unto the angels—but not on the divine plane, not immortality, not the divine nature.

Seeing these things set forth so clearly in the Word of God, shall we not be the more earnest hereafter, the more loyal, the more faithful, that we may obtain the highest reward, even that to which the Lord has invited us—to become members of the body of Christ, members of the royal priesthood?

## EXPECTING A PERSONAL ANTI-CHRIST

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

In harmony with the spirit of a sound mind I prefer to think and speak of the things we know, the things for which we have such a clear, Scriptural basis as to make our position most assuredly correct. However, this letter is being written in order to have your expression upon matters which I do not know, but which seem to be within the range of possibilities, quite a number of passages in the Lord's Word seeming to make them reasonable inferences.

I have presented these suggestions in several discourses: and the brethren have been so stirred to greater diligence by them that, while desirous of saying more that might prove helpful to the various classes, yet my confidence in your consecrated judgment prompts me to present the same for your criticism before making them too conspicuous in my ministry. Whenever given, emphasis has been laid on the point that I was not sure these ideas were correct, being merely infer-

ential, but even if not right, a consideration of the possibility of such happenings could not fail to put us more effectually on our guard than before.

In the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew we find two separate references to false Christs. Verse 5 says, "For many shall come in my name saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." This evidently refers to pseudo-Christs who have arisen during the Gospel age, but before the closing part of the age, for in the next verse he says, "For all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet."

But when we come to verses 23 to 26 we read of another class of false Christs who would appear in the end of the age. In verses 21 and 22 he speaks of the coming of the great "Time of trouble such as was not since the beginning of the world, no, nor ever shall be," and after stating that unless those days were shortened no flesh would be saved, he continues:

"THEN, if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ,

or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs," etc. The adverb "then" is emphatic by position (similar to Matt. 25:1) and would connect the appearance of these false Christs with the time when the great tribulation was due.

It goes on further to inform us that these false Christs would show such signs and wonders that, if possible, even the very elect would be deceived. Would we not be justified in thinking that nothing has yet occurred which would warrant such a remarkably strong declaration? In such a case this sweeping deception must be still future, and as it has to do with this make-believe Christ, therefore the greatest of the false Christs must be yet to come.

Verse 26 offers additional clues to the meaning of this prophecy. It rather intimates there will be two kinds of manifestations of these counterfeit Christs. One is mentioned as occurring in the desert, the other in the secret chambers. You have clearly pointed out the secret chambers as designating the darkened rooms where Spiritism works her mysteries, and for some time past the fallen angels have impersonated our Lord, in addition to masquerading as the departed spirits of the relatives some of those present.

But when and where has the "behold he is in the desert" part of the prophecy had such a fulfilment as we might expect? May it not be just before us? Note that "the secret chambers" is in the plural, as though pointing out a deception oft-repeated, as has been the case; whereas "the desert" is in the singular, as if to teach us there would be but one occurrence of this sort no more.

Can we assume that if the secret-chamber Christs have been the fallen angels, then the Christ who will appear in the desert will be Satan, whose final effort to transform himself into an angel of light will culminate in his appearing as an impersonation of the Lord Jesus?

The hosts of Christendom have been taught that at some time Christ will return, but lacking a knowledge of the manner of the second advent, they have expected him to come in the flesh, accompanied by a multitude of visible angels.

Furthermore, we find a widespread opinion that this event is near. Misinterpreting certain prophecies, the Seventh Day Adventists are proclaiming extensively the thought that when Constantinople falls Christ will come. Various denominational commentaries which give Mohammedanism an unreasonably prominent place in the prophetic portions of the Bible have expressed the same idea. Through internal anarchy or through outside influence the fall of Constantinople may not be very distant; and think of what would result if, coincident with that event, what looked like the long-expected return of Christ should take place on some desert out near Palestine!

It would not be our Lord, but the Evil One impersonating our Redeemer. Imagine the wicked angels appearing with him as though they were the holy angels whom many expect to come with Christ! Suppose other demons would impersonate a few of the dead, as if to indicate a beginning of the resurrection! Think of the signs and wonders they may work as evidence to further deceive the human race into believing Jesus has come!

That this could be done if the Lord would allow it seems a reasonable premise, and that it may be done seems a reasonable inference from certain Scriptures. I find there have been various Bible Students—even centuries ago—who thought they saw in the Word a suggestion that Satan was to appear as a man in the last days. The passage in Isaiah 14:16, where Lucifer is spoken of as a man, is probably the most direct of such references.

There also exists a secondary reason why Satan wishes to be as a man. The True Christ has already returned, but with our natural sight we cannot see him; however, spirit beings, like the devil and his angels, can see him, and as they behold our Lord doing successfully the preparatory work of the kingdom, while they are helpless to thwart the same, it must make them hate that holy Son of God more than ever! How they must envy the human race, who cannot see that present Lord, and must wish they were human also, that they might not behold any longer the One they detest! Thus in permitting them to take on human nature the Lord simply grants them their wish.

Should it be this way, we can readily discern how fully it would, "if possible, deceive the very elect." Catholics, Protestants, Adventists, Mormons and every sect in Christendom would welcome this one as Christ, for isn't this the very way they have looked for him? This would seem like convincing evidence to every infidel on earth, and they would hasten to acknowledge him. Even the hosts of heathendom, unable to gainsay such a demonstration, would fall before him. And those among us who had listened to discourses, etc., but never really made these things their own by a consecrated applica-

tion of them, would hastily denounce us, and renounce our teachings, to bow their hearts to this spurious Christ.

Then we would discern why God had granted us so much light upon the manner of the second advent, and we would need it all. Think of what blasphemy they would consider us guilty as we insisted that this one they called Christ was really the devil! The charge against us would resemble that against our Lord, and the indignation of the mob might quickly terminate the militant part of our experience.

But still other results would follow the appearance of such a pretended Christ. The Bible foretells a great confederacy of the two main divisions of Babylon. For several years the signs of that confederacy were everywhere discernible; but of late there has sprung up a bitter feeling between the two sides, being fanned by anti-Catholic publications, etc., until there seems no likelihood of their drawing any closer together.

Suppose this impersonator of Christ uses his usual subtlety, appointing the Pope prime-minister, Billy Sunday minister of war, etc., or making some such recognition of both Catholics and Protestants; what would more effectively remove the partition separating the sects? How they would throw their arms around each other's necks, and only we would be disfellowshipped!

This would also make the prophecy of the anti-Christ and Man of Sin have a double application, even as you have shown in the instance of other prophecies. The coming of the Elijah had a double application—individually John the Baptist, collectively the church. The Christ has likewise—individually our Lord, but collectively The Christ includes both Head and body. So the collective anti-Christ was the papal system, the individual anti-Christ Satan. As the individual Christ is the Head of the greater Christ, so the individual anti-Christ would be the head of the greater anti-Christ.

May it be just possible that we have been so impressed with the wonderful application of the anti-Christian prophecies to the system that we have overlooked their coming individual fulfilment?

But we know that Satan could not impersonate our Lord for long with any measure of character-likeness to him. With the awful wickedness of his heart, only a few days would suffice to reveal his true spirit, and he would plunge this world into worse than it ever saw before.

Out of reverence and fear for the one whom they supposed was Christ, the world would lay aside its swords only long enough to put away, then would resume the conflict with renewed fury. The hopes of the nominal church and the world had been lifted high only to be dashed to pieces as they perceived the wickedness of the one whose appearing they had hailed.

It has been suggested that the Lord might use his power in some way to prevent Satan from leaving the body of flesh, and thus it would become his prison throughout the Millennium. This would compel him to swallow his own teaching that the body was only a prison in which the real man was confined until liberated by death. He would be forced to experience the very thing he had so untruthfully taught. This gives great force to Isaiah 14:16-19.

There are other points I was going to mention, but probably the letter is already too lengthy; but before closing I wish to mention one advantage of considering these things.

Some of the friends seem to be saying, "The time may be many years off before the church is all glorified, there is so much yet to be accomplished; let us go into business," etc. I have pointed them to these things with the remark, "If this conjecture should be correct, everything yet to be fulfilled before the glorification of the saints might be accomplished in a month." The time may be two weeks or ten years.

Friends have asked me, "But don't you expect the Seventh Volume first? and it will take months to write, publish and assimilate it." My answer has been this: How do we know but that it may simply be an issue of THE WATCH TOWER?

An ordinary looking copy of THE TOWER arrives, and the brother who has learned to value its message takes advantage of the first opportunity to read it. There in the middle of one article he finds a point which proves a key to many passages of Scripture in Revelation; on another page is another such point; and as he reads, it begins to dawn on his mind that he has the Seventh Volume! What comfort and help and assurance it brings, and he is ready for the trial time just ahead!

Another, less appreciative of the light he has been getting, lays that same Tower aside for a more convenient time, unwilling to have it crowd out his pleasures or intrude on his comfort, little realizing what that Tower contains or what he is soon to face, unprepared for it because of a failure to walk in the light already received.



I meant to make this letter a query, but it sounds almost like a sermon. However, I am sure you will understand the spirit which prompts it. Do you think of any Scripture which would seem to disprove it, or do you believe such ideas might in any way prove detrimental to the Lord's people?

Like a younger brother I have ever valued the privilege of looking up to you as an elder brother, and the God of Wisdom has directed you, for in so many ways you have been a blessing to me. The Lord guide you to the very end of the way!

Yours with much Christian Love,

B. H. BARTON.

#### THE EDITOR'S VIEW IS DIFFERENT

We think it not unwise to lay before THE WATCH TOWER readers the above article from the pen of our dear Brother Barton. It may do no harm for us to have the thought before our minds. To some others, as well as to Brother Barton, it may seem to be the truth.

But the view presented does not appeal to the Editor as the correct one. He still believes in harmony with the presentations in STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. The particular passage in question from our Lord's great prophecy in Matthew 24 is treated in detail in STUDIES, Volume IV. He still believes that to be the proper interpretation. However, we claim no infallibility. We claim that there is no direct inspiration from God since the days of the apostles.

It should be remembered that each church organization claims to be the Ecclesia, or Body of Christ, of which he is the Head; and that each regular organization has an executive person or committee that really serves as the head of such organization—as Christ's representative in his body. This thought had its origin in the Eighth Century, when our Roman Catholic friends declared that they set up the kingdom of God, and from which date they count that his reign has been continuous, and that the popes have been his vicegerents—reigning instead of him. Protestant sects have not gone to the same extreme to claim one of their number as substituting for the Lord; but very generally they do claim that Christ's kingdom has been set up and is in operation. The original

thought in the organization of various denominations of Protestants was that it was the true church. It is only of late years that Protestants have agreed to the thought that Christ Jesus has many bodies—many churches. Yet in a confused way they will admit with us that the Bible teaches only one church, or body of Christ; that it is to enter into glory with the Lord by resurrection "change" at the Master's second coming; and that his church is composed of the saints of the Lord, regardless of denominational lines.

These are the false Christs—false bodies of Christ with false heads, or governments not authorized by the Word. They have deceived many—practically the whole world. On the contrary, the people comparatively more or less deranged mentally who have claimed to be Christs have deceived very few in comparison with all mankind. We believe that we have presented the right thought. The Editor is not expecting any personal anti-Christ, nor that Satan will materialize as a man and misrepresent the Lord. On the contrary, as the great time of trouble progresses the spirit of evil will be made manifest more and more in all the "children of disobedience"; and more and more they will become vexed and angry with the children of obedience, who will be standing loyally by the Word of God and the principles of righteousness and love. It is from such a division of the people, we believe, that the antitypical Elijah class will suffer violence; first, represented by the chariot of fiery trouble; secondly, by the whirlwind of anarchy.

However, let us cast our care upon the Lord and wait patiently for his time and be fully content therewith. Then all will be well with us, whatever way the matter may turn out. The time, apparently, is not far distant when these matters will be very fully demonstrated. The spirit of anger, malice, hatred, envy and strife burns more and more fiercely in the hearts of the children of disobedience—in whom the works of the flesh and of the devil will undoubtedly be more and more manifested. In other words, Christ will be more and more exhibited in his followers, but the spirit of Satan will be more manifest in the remainder of the world.

## THE TRUTH IN SOUTH AFRICA

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

It is with feelings of deep thankfulness to God that at the close of another year's activity in the harvest service, I am privileged to forward the report of our labors in Africa during 1914-15. In presenting the last Annual Report I expressed the hope that the next occasion would find us reporting to headquarters beyond the veil. That hope has not been realized. I feel certain, however, that I am expressing the mind of the brethren in Africa, when I say that we are deeply grateful to God for the privilege accorded to us further, to make our calling and election SURE. The past year has been one of continuous testings and trials, both to individuals and to Classes, furnishing abundant opportunities for the display of the Christian graces laboriously cultivated in years gone by, and for the demonstration of that faith and patient endurance which is the supreme test of our devotion to the Lord.—James 1:4.

These very facts assure us that the time of our deliverance is at hand, that the Lord is, as it were, putting the finishing touches to the living stones, preparatory to their being set in the Temple of his glory in the near future. For many years the great Master Workman has been chiseling, dressing and polishing these, bringing them into conformity with the symmetrical outlines of the Chief Corner Stone, and we are grateful to him for the likeness. Now, while still in the quarry, he is fitting them each to the other, and if the process develops friction and reveals faults and weaknesses hitherto unsuspected, these will be endured all the more patiently and we will surrender ourselves the more unreservedly into the hands of the Great Master Builder, because we know these experiences to be the prelude to the speedy establishment of the great Spiritual Temple, so admirably designed and accurately fitted as to permit of its erection "without the sound of a hammer."

The year that has gone has been the busiest in the history of the Harvest Work in Africa:

Volumes of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES sold....	3,141
Scenarios, Hymnals, Mannas, Diaglots, etc., sold .....	1,589
Free literature circulated.....	75,131
Meetings held.....	312
Miles traveled.....	4,682

You will see from above report that the output of volumes has been well nigh double that of last year, while a gratifying increase is also noticeable in all other publications.

The various Classes are still holding up the banner of present truth, and the dear brethren are not only holding fast to the faith, but adding to their numbers as well. Perhaps there is more opposition than ever before but that is the natural corollary of growth and a good evidence that the brethren are alive and awake to their privileges and that the truth is doing its separating work, gathering the wheat from among the tares in Babylon.

During the year I have made two pilgrim tours covering nearly five thousand miles. One of these was in connection with the EUREKA DRAMA set sent us from Brooklyn. The Drama drew large audiences everywhere, but the results have not been altogether as anticipated. However, a great witness has been borne to the people of South Africa, and the outcome is in the hands of the Lord.

The newspaper work in Africa is, in the Lord's providence, practically closed. The war has so decreased the supply of paper in this Dominion that most of the newspapers had to curtail the size of their journals and all had to considerably economize their space. We had only two native papers publishing the sermons, and these insisted on so abridging them as to render them useless as a means of propaganda, so I have withdrawn them.

The native brethren in South Africa still retain their interest in the truth, and are waiting patiently the further development of the Lord's purpose. The progress of the war in Nyasaland and South Africa has made reports from that region somewhat scarce; but when last heard from, the Brethren there were still holding fast to the truth, living in that state of detachment and patient waiting upon God which is the attitude of all the Lord's people at the present time. Your communication re work in Rhodesia, to Mr. Nodehouse, was duly received. I have written that gentleman asking for particulars and am waiting his reply.

While, therefore, our opportunities are not quite so large as formerly, there is not sufficient evidence to warrant the view that this door is closed or nearly closed in South Africa, and while the Lord permits we shall hold the fort for him, telling out the glad tidings of the coming kingdom now so

near at hand, till he says "It is enough." Pray for us, dear Brother, as we do for you, that we may be kept faithful unto death and may be counted worthy of a place in the kingdom.

With continued personal devotion, and a large apprecia-

tion of your ministrations, prayers and loving interest in the harvest work in South Africa, I am,

Your Brother and Co-Laborer in his Glad Service,  
WM. W. JOHNSTON.—*South Africa.*

## THE DAILY CUP

*"I will take the Cup of Salvation."*—Psalm 116:13.

With a tender smile on His loving face,  
My Lord stood holding the Cup of Grace—  
"Wilt thou drink, dear one, today?"

O loving Bridegroom, I am so weak!  
My enemies even now do seek  
To cause me to shrink away.

Today the Cup seems a bitter draught  
That cost Thee Thy life, as once Thou quaffed—  
Increase my faith, I pray!

"My Dove, I will show thee the care I take  
To guard the Cup for thy dear sake,  
That thou mayst drink each day."

Oh, wondrous vision my Lord revealed!  
I saw my soul's fierce battle-field,  
And the enemies dreaded by me.

The World, the Flesh and Satan wise  
Were all made plain in their evil guise,  
Plotting adversity.

"I will fill the Cup with troubles sore,  
Pour them in till they're brimming o'er—  
I'll make it a Poison draught!

"So bitter 'twill be that its very breath  
Will cause here to shrink from such a death!"—  
Thus Satan in wickedness laughed.

And the World and the Flesh in blindness lent  
Their aid to his wicked, fell intent:  
My soul felt their power so dire.

Then I turned and looked at my Bridegroom's face—  
The glory from it filled all the place,  
But His eyes were flames of fire.

"Begone, ye enemies of My Bride!  
The Cup is MINE!" He sternly cried;  
"I guard this Cup each day.

"And nothing goes in it beyond the power  
Of My Bride to bear in her weakest hour,  
If she look to Me for grace."

Then He turned to me with the tenderest mien—  
"My Love, art thou strengthened by what thou hast seen?  
Canst thou now the enemy face?"

Dear Lord, forgive me, I humbly cried,  
That I should forget that He who died  
To redeem my soul, is by my side  
And holds the Cup in his hand.

Gladly I take the Loving-Cup,  
Gladly I drink as Thou holdest it up;  
To share it with Thee is grand!

And if it should be that this is the day  
When the flesh, as I drink, shall pass for aye,  
Then 'twill be the Cup of Joy.

Oh, wondrous miracle of grace!  
The smile on my loving Bridegroom's face  
As I pressed my lips to the Cup,

Filled my soul o'erflowing with peace Divine!  
And not alone did this peace I find,  
But my heart with Joy welled up.

And so each day as I take the Cup  
From my Best Beloved, I meekly look up  
And whisper a prayer for grace.

And He gives me grace; and Peace Divine,  
And Love and Faith and Joy are mine,  
As I gaze upon His face.

My hope is in faith the Cup to drain  
That I in His Kingdom with Him may reign;  
The Cup of Joy I then will claim,  
Triumphant by His Grace!

LILLA S. WARD.

## ENTERTAINMENT OF THE PILGRIMS

All friends of the truth properly feel it an honor and a privilege to entertain the pilgrim brethren during their brief stays. However, the interests of the truth and the comfort of the pilgrims should also be considered. The elders, or, under their direction, the class secretary, should see to it that pilgrims are entertained in homes where they will not be a burden and where they will be comfortable. Those who travel and preach continuously are more or less under a nervous

strain and need comfort, proper rest, and some degree of privacy for meditation. All having the interests of the work at heart should, therefore, cheerfully co-operate that the pilgrim may be entertained in a home where accommodations are suitable.

The entire class would surely be disgraced if the Society's representatives were otherwise treated. We are sure that only thoughtlessness of some has made this suggestion necessary.

## INTERESTING LETTERS

### BLESSED AUSTRALASIAN CONVENTION

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

Our convention is over once more, but it has been the best yet, in attendance, for food provided and for joy generally. Of course, it is only a very small matter compared to your large conventions. We had sessions every day from Sunday to Sunday, and attendance ranged from just a little over a hundred, to 230. The testimony meetings, although they were liberally arranged for—as you will see from the enclosed program—still seemed too short to let every one who desired have an opportunity to speak. On the New Year's morning we had a baptism service, when fourteen symbolized their consecration. It is beautiful to see many old and young yet coming to rejoice to lay their all on the altar of sacrifice and seek to follow the Lamb.

We unanimously resolved that the time was very opportune for you to pay us a visit, and it was proposed by Brother Gates, of Sydney, and seconded by Brother Allison, of Adelaide, that the following letter be sent to you:

"DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

In bringing to a close this convention which has been a great source of blessing and refreshment to all the dear friends attending from other States as well as to the local Ecclesia, we desire to send a message expressing our love to you and all the dear co-laborers in America. It is also suggested that we send you a hearty invitation to pay us a visit. Our thought is that, owing to the war, it may be that your privileges of service in Europe may be curtailed, and also your visits to England, and that thus in the Lord's good providence your steps may be guided in this direction. We assure you that our hearts' affections go out to you; and to see and speak with you, would be joy second only to that which we hope so soon to have beyond the veil. Earnest prayers for your highest welfare."

Yours in the Service of Christ,  
R. E. B. NICHOLSON, Manager,  
Australasian Branch.