

I rejoice, dear brother, to attest again to you my full appreciation of your labor in the Lord, my fullest confidence and my earnest, warm and unfeigned brotherly love. I hope ere long to see you again face to face. Give all the Bible House household our warm love and greeting. Yours in him,
W. E. PAGE,—Wis.

[IN REPLY:—The Society has similarly advised the dear colporteurs, and at the risk of being misunderstood, has adhered to its rule of not making mixed assignments. However, we consider that our duty on this subject ceases there. Where the dear friends, for reasons of their own, work on each other's assignment we do not feel it incumbent to object further, knowing well that their heart-desires are of the very best.]

Dear Brother in Christ:—

It is now about five years since I came into the light of present truth, and the Lord has blessed me with the privilege of having the six volumes of DAWN, and the TOWERS from 1890, all of which I have carefully gone through, and from which I have received a course of Bible Study, a knowledge of our heavenly Father, and our dear Lord, and the plans and purposes and my relation thereto, sufficient thanks for which would indeed be hard for me to put in words. But I

have the privilege of thanking you for the service rendered unto me, for I knew nothing of the Bible, although a reader of it from boyhood, until the Lord in his own due time placed in my hands the "meat in due season" from your hands.

I have in these past years learned to go to these helps (TOWERS and DAWNS) for all points that have perplexed me, and with very few exceptions have always received a reasonable Scriptural explanation that made things plain to my mind. Until now if a point comes up that I do not grasp I go for help, using the assistance the Lord has provided in them for me and for all the watching ones. The exceptions I have written to you about, and you know they have been few, and in thanking you I am thanking our dear Lord and Head, who "has girded himself" and is "now serving the table." Our heavenly Father I also thank.

I have practised medicine here since 1889 and had quite an extensive practice up to the present time, and since coming into the Truth Sister Senor and I have used up in the truth, one way or another, as we thought the Lord would have us use it, all above our living expenses (and a provision for those dependent upon us, a reasonable one we hope, until 1914), by sending TOWERS, DAWNS, etc., over the counties near by.

Your brother in Christ, S. D. SENOR,—Missouri.

"SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD"

The Feast was spread at Simon's house, and as they sat at meat,

A woman came and silent stood within the open door—
Close pressed against her throbbing heart an alabaster box
Of purest spikenard, costly, rare, she held. With modest fear,
She dreaded to attract the curious gaze of those within,
And yet her well-beloved Friend was there, her Master, Lord.
With wondrous intuition she divined that this might be
Her last, her only opportunity to show her love;
She thought of all that he had done for her, the holy hours
She spent enraptured at his feet, unmindful of all else,
If only she might hear those words of *Truth*, those words of *Life*.

She thought of that dark hour when Lazarus lay within the tomb

And how he turned her night to day, her weeping into joy.
Her fair face flushed, with deepening gratitude her pure eyes shone.

With swift, light step she crossed the crowded room. She bravely met

Those questioning eyes (for Love will find its way through paths where lions

Fear to tread); with trembling hands she broke the seal and poured

The precious contents of the box upon her Savior's feet,
And all the house was filled with fragrance wonderful and sweet.

She could not speak, her heart's devotion was too deep, her tears

Fell softly, while she took her chiefest ornament, her long
And silken hair and wiped his sacred feet,—when suddenly
A rude voice broke the golden silence with, "What waste! this might

Have sold for much, to feed the poor!" She lower bent her head—

To her it seemed so mean a gift for love so great to make!

Again a voice re-echoed through the room, her blessed Lord's.
(He half arose and gently laid his hand upon her hair)—

And how it thrilled her fainting heart to hear him sweetly say,
"Rebuke her not, for she hath wrought a good work, what she could;

Aforehand, to anoint me for my burying she hath come,
And this her deed of love throughout the ages shall be told!"

* * *

How oft since first I read the story of this saint of old,
My own poor heart has burned with fervent, longing, deep desire,

That I might thus have ministered unto my Lord and King—
"The chiefest of ten thousand, altogether lovely One."

And now, to learn—Oh! precious thought, 'tis not too late,
I still

May pour Love's priceless ointment on "the members" of his Feet!

Dear Lord, I pray, Oh! help me break with sacrificial hand
The seal of Self, and pour the pent-up odors of my heart

Upon thy "Feet!" Oh! let me spend my days and nights in toil,

That I, perchance, may save from needless wandering, and help

To keep them in the narrow way that leads to light and life.
Oh! let me lay within their trembling hands a rose of love,

A lily's pure and holy inspiration on their breast!

Dear Master, let me kneel with them in dark Gethsemane;

Oh! help me boldly stand and meekly bear the scoffs and jeers

Of cruel, mocking tongues! Oh! may I count no cost, e'en

Life itself, too great to serve, to bless, to comfort thy dear "Feet,"

And when the last drop of my heart's devotion has been shed,
Oh! may I hear thy sweet voice say, "*She hath done what she*

could!" —G. W. Seibert,—April, 1908.

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

NOMINAL CHURCH DYING, SAYS DR. EATON

"Brethren, I say to you this morning that the American church is dying. It is dying! It is dying! Don't forget it! Ten years from now if I lie in my grave I would be willing to have you confront me at the judgment seat of God with that statement. By that statement I mean that Protestant Christianity is dying with marvelous rapidity."

So spoke Rev. Charles A. Eaton at the Euclid Avenue Baptist church, Cleveland. This was his seventh anniversary sermon before this congregation and with passionate earnestness he strove to bring vividly before his hearers the effects of commercialism which he contends is sapping the religious life in the United States. He showed that churches, instead of gaining, were losing throughout the world.

Dr. Eaton's sermon on "The Impending Crisis in American Christianity" is, in part, as follows:

"Throughout the entire Christian world we are swiftly passing into a period of profound religious depression, amounting to almost complete failure on the part of the church.

"In Italy the headquarters of the great Roman Catholic church, one-third of the people at the very outside, are more or less nominal followers of the church of Rome; another third, possibly, are more or less sympathetic toward the church, because it is politically useful; while another third are out and out continually and completely antagonistic, apparently not only to the church of Rome, but to all forms of Christianity. This is the land where the church of St. Peter has had an unbroken existence for nineteen centuries.

BRITAIN'S GREAT LOSSES

"You enter France—the same story is true, only aggravated and multiplied a thousand fold.

"You enter Great Britain, which I consider to be the last citadel of Christianity in the world, with a people more robust and sane in their religious interests and sympathies than any other people. And what is the condition there? The other day Mr. Shakespeare, the great leader of our Baptist church in England, appeared before the Baptist convention and delivered an address upon the arrested progress of British Christianity. That, he said, covered the whole field of all the churches, but especially, of course, with reference to the Baptists.

"He pointed out that the nonconformist churches of Great Britain last year not only made no progress, but met, according to their statistics, with an absolute loss of 18,000; that the Baptist church of Great Britain last year not only made no progress but according to their published statistics lost 5,000 people.

AMERICAN CHURCH DWINDLING

"You cross to America. We have one man in this country who I believe is doing more to educate the American church, to arouse us to a realization of our condition, than any other—I refer to Josiah Strong. Dr. Strong tells that if eighty represents the gain of our churches on the population during the first half of the nineteenth century, twenty represents that gain during the last half. Four represents that gain during the last twenty years, and one represents that gain during the last ten years.

"In the year 1905 there were nearly 7,000 Presbyterian, Congregationalist and Methodist churches that had not one single member unite with them in twelve months. In a recent year in New York city, according to the statement of Dr. Aked, of the Fifth Avenue Baptist church, 335 Protestant churches reported a net gain that year of 386 members. That is to say 335 churches gained one member apiece and fifty of them gained two in twelve months. In a city of 4,000,000 people, those churches comprise in their membership the mightiest men in finance, in commerce, in politics, that this nation has—which means that there is heaped up a fund of potential power, the like of which can be found in no other organization of that great city.

CAMPAIGN OF FAILURE

"And they stood there in the midst of 4,000,000 people pouring out their money like water, following the leadership of the great preachers of the American continent, following them week in and week out, for twelve long months, and all that they could do was to get one person out of four million in each church to accept the Lord Jesus Christ. These are facts.

"The American people for the last generation have seized that marvelous instrument furnished them by science, and have gone out to give themselves unreservedly to the material development of their nation. We are proud of the fact that we are a commercial and business people. Our art is now made the servant of our commerce. No longer do we build the glorious churches and cathedrals, except in certain instances, in our great cities, to express the artistic sense of our people. We build banks in this present age, decorate them with a lavish splendor worthy of God Almighty himself. We have turned the intelligence of our people, as keen and resourceful as any in the world, to this one question, 'How shall we produce material gain?'

RICHES HIGHEST GOOD

"Today we are not in the midst of a religious epidemic. We have not enough thought on the subject to create even a revival, let alone an epidemic. But we have today a financial epidemic. That is today the thing we think most of—the thing that we place at the bottom of our life, the thing that we hail as our highest good.

"That is the thing that men have gone mad over today, and so, sweeping over our land like a gigantic shadow, is this awful fear of financial ruin, which constitutes a commercial epidemic in our midst.

"The hope of the church today lies in a rediscovery of Jesus. It does not lie in more organization. We have too much now. It does not lie in more wealth. We have all the wealth we need, if we had the head to use it. It does not lie in more culture. We have all the gifts that any group of people could possibly ask for. It does not lie in any lack of consciousness of need. We know the needs of the people as perhaps we never knew them before. It lies in a new acquaintance with Jesus.

THE CHURCH DYING

"Brethren, I say to you this morning, that the American church is dying—it is dying! It is dying! Don't forget it.

"Now, in closing, I sound the note of experience. I want to say to my members here, that *the next seven years upon which this church is entering are going to be twice as hard*

as the seven years just gone by. I want to say to you men, that it will be harder for you to be a Christian tomorrow than it is today. I want to say to you, young men and middle-aged, whose hearts are stirring in response to the appeal of Christ, ponder well your step because you cannot follow Jesus unless you break in your hands the box of precious ointment.

"I want to say to you who have meditated about surrendering your lives to the age, that that is the common tendency of all, and if you do it, no matter what your name may be, you have ceased to be Christians. I want to say to you Christians who are looking for the place that is easier than what you have now, that there is no longer any easier place. The next thirty years will be harder. They will stir the evil tendencies of this nation completely from center to circumference."

THE RELIGION OF SOCIALISM

Socialism, according to Mr. Richard Whiteing, does not, at present, seem to "want a religion of its own," but it is his belief that it will sooner or later come to want one. The Socialist movement everywhere, and especially that in England, he avers, will find that its foundation-principle "as a mere economic theory is absolutely inadequate. To get its full driving force it must have a faith of its own." At the present moment, as he sees the matter, "Socialists are content with the discovery that all existing creeds may, and even must, lead to their platform." This is the deduction derived from the fact that at a Socialist gathering almost every profession of faith is represented—"ardent Anglicans and Roman Catholics, Freethinkers, Moral Persuasionists, Ethical Theorists, and the rest of them." Mr. Whiteing, who is the author of "No. 5 John Street" and "Ring Out the New," is an ardent Socialist, and gives his views here quoted in the *London Daily Mail*. He looks upon the Rev. R. J. Campbell as typifying the tendency he here sketches. Mr. Campbell, he says, "has long been engaged in a process which might be not irreverently described as the cleaning of a picture—the picture being that of the Founder of the Christian faith. It is an attempt to remove all the incrustations of dogma and traditional belief, and to reach the great original beneath." This pure image, he asserts, "will prove to be that of the first Socialist." The faith which Socialism will ultimately accept as its own is visioned by Mr. Whiteing as the following:

"As I have tried to express it elsewhere, 'There must come to men the Appointed One, who will show them by his shining example what the religion is to be. We may only guess at his message, but surely it will be the purified conscience as the Word of God, no more no less, and never a line of text. Then saints, hierarchies, and choirs celestial will seem but poets' playthings. Taken seriously, they have given us the whole of that unhappy fakir tribe who are capable of thinking of their Maker to the total exclusion of the thing he has made. Will not the Appointed One bid us leave that Maker—Jehovah, God or Lord, First Cause or Universal Soul—to contemplations of his own nature more within the measure of his own powers, and listen merely for the voice of him in the purified breast, especially for the undertones in which the sweetness of its message lies? Then when, haply, the voice says charity, in its larger rendering of love, brotherhood, self-sacrifice, obey it, and leave the metaphysics of the question to take care of itself. Above all, without waiting for any behest, burn the later doctors of the church (not by any means the earlier), as the madman's housekeeper burned his books. So will come the great change, and the democracy will step forth armed and equipped for its conquest of the world. The old mystery of regeneration is true as ever as a principle, in spite of its fantastic setting in the creeds of the hour.

"Democracy must get rid of the natural man of each for himself, and have a new birth into the spiritual man, the ideal self of each for all. This is its great lesson. The monstrous heresy of self-worship, self-absorption, whether as capitalist, artist, bonze, or merely greedy fellow with storage for one and an appetite for two, is the essentially irreligious idea.

"Democracy is a religion, or nothing, with its doctrine, its form, its ritual, its ceremonies, its cenobites, its government as a church—above all, its organized sacrifice of the altar, the sacrifice of self. This is the deepest craving of human nature. All attempts to reconcile man's heroism to his interests have ever failed. His goodness must make him smart."

"This is what is coming because this must come. Meanwhile I think many of us are trying to reduce all religions to their common denominator of liberty, equality, and fraternity, otherwise brotherly love. It is perfectly certain that the masses are growing more and more indifferent to the image of the Founder of Christianity in his present setting. If he is to appeal to them he must lay aside his crown of jewels of modern symbolism and resume his crown of thorns."

The mass of humble believers interpret the conception of

the "Son of God—the Man of Sorrows"—says Mr. Whiteing, as "the great comrade who tried to get lowly and foolish and baffled people righted, and died for it—worse luck." But such a one, he maintains, "they don't find in the existing systems." The composite personality of the Son of God—the Second Person of the Trinity—"all that 'the church' holds most dear, leaves them quite mystified and, I must say it, quite cold." Mr. Whiteing goes on:

"One day I ventured to call a Hyde Park orator a Christian Socialist by way of compliment, but he flew into a great rage. 'Nothing of the sort, if you please—a Socialist Christian, at best. Don't put the cart before the horse.' He meant that the Socialism was the touchstone, not the Christianity, as they understand it in the churches now. You could not be a Socialist without being a Christian, whether you knew it or not. You might easily think yourself a Christian without being the other thing, and the Socialism was the root of the matter. Just that and nothing more.

"The image of the Christ in the popular mind is that of one who came to bring more happiness in this world to poor men and women beaten in the struggle—material happiness. Do not be in any doubt about that—a more equal distribution of right-down pounds, shillings, and pence, the second loaf in the cupboard, good shoes and stockings for all the children, and the Sunday suit for all.

"What they think, what they say, when they are able to say it, is that the rich people and the theologians between them, often working hand in hand, have 'nobbled' the churches, and made their symbolic cup a mere opiate for hard luck, instead of the healing draft. The parsons are paid to keep people quiet, that is the ruling idea. They cannot get their money for current expenses without the rich, and so getting it, of course, they preach the rich man's creed.

"The attempt to substitute feasts, fasts, and festivals of the church for all this, with elaborate processions, will, historically, I feel convinced, mark the end of the present religious system. Let our Anglican revivalists just try to recognize how a poor, dim creature, born into everlasting shortcomings, without volition or vocation, stands apart from all that, and sees nothing in it but embroidered garments and futile excitements about Quinquagesima Sunday and other functions with long names that touch him no more than a birthday at court!

"Believe me, as I once ventured to say, people in West Ham look on your ecclesiastical anchorites as mere 'ammy-tures' in the artistry of privation, with the sacred institution ever behind them as an ark of refuge to save them from the worst. Be out of work for six weeks, and out of earnings that never rise to more than the docker's tanner, and see what you'll think of St. Francis and his flirtation with the lady of poverty then.

"No, no, 'Here and now.' That is how the church began. The clever fellows got hold of it as a going concern, 'imperialized' it, and so started to make it pretty much what it is today. Charity is still its abortive message; justice is what the others want."—*Literary Digest*.

WAS JESUS A SOCIALIST

Among Socialists Jesus has frequently been claimed as one of themselves. "One would like to say that he was," observes a writer in *The Interior* (Chicago), for he was "social in the largest sense because he sacrificed himself for the welfare of other men." But since "socialist" in the modern world has come to mean (the writer interprets) "the adherent of an economic cult that would reorganize society on the public ownership of property," he does not allow the ranking of Jesus among them. Against what he calls the "rash assertions of agitators," he places this "proposition" as capable of being established from the gospels:

"Neither socialism nor any other economic doctrine ever entered into the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth.

"He simply paid no attention to the economic phases of life. He treated industrial questions exactly as he treated political questions; he let them alone.

"There were doubtless two reasons for this. Jesus didn't come into the world to meddle with the clock of human progress. Some day the world would learn that democracy is better government than despotism, free labor a better industrial system than slavery, and would get hold of the facts all the stronger for having had to dig them out. Jesus had no time to stop to teach the world what it would eventually come at on its own account.

"The second and positive reason why he did not concern himself with social questions was because it was part of his mission to throw temporal considerations into the background.

"His principal teaching business was to spread a doctrine of life that made a man's economic condition a secondary matter.

"Here Jesus differs from Socialism the whole length of the diameter. The thorough-going Socialist thinks poverty the worst thing that can happen to a man. His great plea is to abolish poverty. Jesus didn't think being poor mattered much—not at all if the man was the right sort. He was poor himself, and didn't care in the least.

"The overmastering principle that decides how Jesus looks at any or all human circumstances on this earth is this:

"If a man does the will of the Father in heaven, nothing in his earthly circumstances can be wrong.

"This confidence is half a faith that the Father will compel circumstances to turn out favorably; half a faith that a man who lives for the Father can be happy in any circumstances."

The nearest Jesus ever came to an economic question, the writer points out, was "when he saw that some certain man's economic condition was hindering his development in unselfish, God-loving and man-loving character." He goes on:

"Modern social philosophers say it is the poor who don't have a fair chance at fine character, but Jesus thought different—he considered the rich the most handicapped.

"When with his marvelous inlook into the heart the Master understood that the rich young ruler thought so much about his wealth that he couldn't think much about his neighbors, the prescription for cure was instantaneous and unsparing: 'Sell that which thou hast and give to the poor.' Jesus didn't speak so out of hate for the property but out of yearning for the man. If he could in this way give the youth a big heart full of spontaneous impulse to help people, he knew it would be worth the price.

"But where he didn't find worldly possessions hindering the growth of a man's nobler character, he simply ignored them. Giving half delivered Zaccheus from the bondage of avarice, and Jesus asked no more. He was equally at home with the poor and with the rich. He loved both for common qualities which are counted in no coin of earth.

"Jesus taught neighbor-love absolutely, not as an incident but as an essential of religion, but he never so much as hinted at a social programme for demonstrating that aspect of religion.

"Jesus was no programme-builder. This is one of the very hardest things for the modern age to comprehend in the Master. The latter day must have an organization at work or it thinks it has nothing. But Jesus had an unbounded faith in the power of a spirit at work in and through the lives of individual men. He did not organize even his church; he simply put the motive of it in a few lives, and trusted that motive to make an organism.

"Likewise, when he said, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,' he did not deposit the dynamic of that love in some artificial social body, either then existent or afterward to be created, but he imparted it by contact to the affections and wills of his friends, and left them to extend it in the same manner.

"Their first expression of it—the communism of the Jerusalem church—was economically faulty; it wouldn't work. Taught by their experience, the early church leaders did not attempt the same system elsewhere. But the spirit which their initial communism crudely manifested did not disappear with that experiment. In that generation and in all generations after, adjusting itself more and more to the laws of society as they are continually better known, the manward love of Jesus Christ has found, and is yet to find, an ever larger and more adequate demonstration."—*Literary Digest*.

A NEW JERUSALEM IS BUILDING

Adolph Sterner writing from Jerusalem to a friend in this country says:

"People here are not goaded on by competition and their surroundings make for indolence and stagnation. Nevertheless a spirit of progress has developed which commands respect. If you lived here you would know what a new house in Jerusalem means and you would stand aghast. I did when I was told that two hundred had been completed in the last three months. At Jaffa the improvements have been more extensive. An art school under the direction of Boris Schatz, who was at the head of the Bulgarian Academy of Fine Arts at Sofia, is flourishing, and carpet and rug-weaving, carving, modeling and metal working are taught to boys and girls who are of the same class as children who years ago were taught to beg from the tourists. Jerusalem is shaking off its garb of antiquity—a new Jerusalem is building."—*The American Hebrew*.

MIRACLE WHEAT

NEW VARIETY PRODUCED YIELDING 277 BUSHEL OF GRAIN TO ACRE

Wheat with stalks like sugar cane and yielding 277 bushels of highly nutritious kernels to the acre has been produced

as a result of experiments made in Idaho by Allen Adams of Minneapolis.

The new wheat has been named "Alaska" because of its hardness. It is either spring or winter wheat, just as the farmer desires to sow. It is so sturdy that storms that ruin other stock affect its giant stems but little, and the heads remain upright through ordinary hailstorms.

The yield shows that Adams has been able to obtain an increase of 222 fold. One head of the giant wheat was planted in the fall of 1904. The seeds from that head were planted the next year and seven pounds of seed obtained. This was sown in the spring of 1906, and from the seven pounds were harvested 1,554 pounds that fall. In the fall of the same year he sowed it as winter wheat, but conditions were adverse. Almost all the "blue stem" and "club" were destroyed, and only a third of the crop of experimental wheat came to maturity, yet there was a yield of 50,000 pounds. A heavy hailstorm in July was the cause of the ruined wheat crop, which left scarcely any of the ordinary wheat standing.

Further experiments brought forth a yield of 277 bushels to an acre. The Idaho College of Agriculture has made a laboratory test of the wheat and reports the grain plump and

sound and that it should make better bread than the ordinary wheat.—*Beloit Free Press*.

THE CZAR IN THE NET OF SPIRITISTS

What we have been hearing rumored, now seems to be certain, namely, that the Czar is being counseled into the snare of spiritists. This hard-pressed and unfortunate man gets his future foretold by spiritualistic mediums. His judicious premier, Herr Stolypin, has called his attention to the danger and it appears that he was warned repeatedly, but without success. The spirit mediums have earnestly warned the Czar against Stolypin, wherefore the latter has to guard himself from saying anything further. The physician advised the Czarina to leave the country for her health, but a spirit medium communicated to her that her youngest son will die if she leaves Russia. Thereupon she decided to remain at home. The mother of the Czar sought to drive away the mediums, but in doing this she only succeeded in falling into the Czar's disfavor. It is a repetition, in the case of Nicholas II., of the story of Saul, who, in the time of need, betook himself to the Witch of Endor.—*Translated from the Apologete, Cincinnati, Ohio*.

"OBEDIENCE BETTER THAN SACRIFICE"

1 Sam. 15:1-35.—JULY 26.

Golden Text:—"The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey."—Josh. 24:24.

Our lesson tells of the testing of King Saul, of his failure to stand the tests, and of the consequent rejection of his family and himself from the kingdom. His history may be divided into four parts: (1) The favorable opportunities of his youth—energetic, fine looking, modest, his choice as the king of Israel was generally conceded to be an excellent one. (2) In the earlier years of his reign he was a successful general and an able organizer of his kingdom. (3) In his testing time he failed and was rejected, partially at first, more thoroughly subsequently. (4) The decline of his manhood, his almost loss of reason, and finally the tragic death of himself and his sons. Today's lesson deals specially with the third of these epochs—his testing.

The Philistines exercised a kind of overlordship in Palestine, presumably collecting taxes as the consideration for permitting the people to have a measure of peace and possession of the country. Apparently they had fortified cities in various parts of Israel's territory, and from their representatives in these the word came that the Israelites had anointed Saul to be their king, a circumstance which was understood to imply the throwing off of the Philistine yoke, a declaration of independence. At once the Philistines assembled an army wherewith to overthrow the new kingdom. The record that they had thirty thousand chariots is supposed to have been a copyist's error for three thousand; for the number of horsemen, two to each chariot, is given as six thousand. This considerable army marched into Palestine; and a battle ensued between them and the Israelites. King Saul evidently desired to be in harmony with the Lord, and realized still that without divine interposition he would be powerless to repel an invader of such strength. The prophet Samuel was communicated with, and he promised to come within seven days to offer sacrifice to God on Israel's behalf, that the Lord's blessing might attend his people and bring them the victory, in harmony with the divine covenant.

King Saul waited for six days, and meantime saw his army melting from desertion, for the Israelites were poorly armed and greatly in fear. They had practically no weapons, merely their agricultural implements for weapons of war. Apparently the Philistines had previously deprived them of fighting weapons, and in some manner had hindered the Kenites, who were the smiths of the time, from serving them in the manufacture of swords and spears. When the seventh day had come, King Saul, wearied of waiting for Samuel, offered the sacrifice himself, contrary to the divine order. Immediately Samuel appeared, and, pointing out to Saul his failure, stated that obedience to God would have been more appreciated by the Almighty than were the sacrifices. Samuel also pointed out that the sacrifice under the circumstances was a sin, and that the result of this disobedience was that God would not permit Saul and his kingdom to be perpetuated, though he promised that the battle immediately before them would be successful for Israel's sake and for the furtherance of God's own cause.

The difficulty was Saul's failure to respect the divine arrangement, his presumption in undertaking to do what had not been committed to his care, but was under the charge of another. The Lord's cause was not hindered; but King Saul's

own prosperity was interfered with by his neglect of the divine arrangement.

THE LESSON FOR SPIRITUAL ISRAELITES

What lesson may we draw from this incident? If for the moment we think of Saul as representing those who have been favored of God, and called to joint-heirship with Jesus in his kingdom and anointed with the holy Spirit, we may see in his early victories a picture of our good beginning, when we trusted God implicitly, and sought to do merely as he directed, and to wait patiently and trustfully for him to guide in all of our affairs. As Saul should have made progress and become stronger in his faith and patience and obedience, so should our earliest experiences as the Lord's servants bring to us increasing patience, perseverance, faith, confidence, implicit obedience. But as this was not the case with King Saul, so it is not the case with many of those who have been anointed for joint-heirship with the Lord in his kingdom. Many of these have similar experiences to that of Saul. Instead of their growing more dependent upon the Lord, the favors received at his hand make them less particular to know and to do his will. They still reverence the Lord; they still recognize that without him they could do nothing; but they are not sufficiently careful to note just what he would have them to do. Sometimes they undertake to do the work of others, and to that extent are "busy-bodies in other man's matters," as King Saul busy-bodied and sinned in attempting to do the work that belonged to the prophet.

We should see that in the divine mind obedience is one of the most important elements of character. The Lord has us in training in the school of Christ for a great work in the future; and the first prerequisite for future honors and opportunities very properly must be our obedience to the opportunities and directions of the Lord in the present time. This our Lord explained clearly in his parables, saying that to some of his servants he had entrusted more talents than to others; that each would be called upon to give an account for the proper exercise of the talents, responsibilities and commands that had been put upon him, and that each would be rewarded in proportion as he used the talents given to him. Our Lord's expression on the subject is, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much."—Luke 16:10.

Here, then, is our lesson, "Obedience is better than sacrifice" in God's sight. He will not either approve or reward carelessness on our part in this matter. On the contrary, inattention to his direct will would mark us as proportionately unfit for his direct service, either here or hereafter. This implies on our part such a loyalty to the Lord, such a carefulness in respect to his service, such a recognition of each other in respect to the Lord and his service, that we would go about very carefully in our endeavors to serve his cause. So the Apostle exhorts, "Let us walk circumspectly," carefully, scrutinizingly.—Eph. 5:15.

As the mariner guides the course of his ship by certain charts which show hidden rocks and shoals, and by the stars in their courses, so the Christian is furnished with a chart which shows him the course which he should pursue, and the things which would be displeasing to God and injurious to

himself. That chart is the Bible, and whoever would be in harmony with God must not only hearken for his message but keep track also of the hidden dangers which beset his course. Each one of us is on trial. This Gospel age is our Day of Judgment, of testing. The Lord himself is scrutinizing the course we are taking. It is not sufficient to him that we shall have zeal. The zeal which he will approve is that which operates from love and along the lines of his instruction. The zeal which disregards the divine instruction is not approved; it leads to shipwreck.

The Apostle gives some suggestions along this line, saying that every member of the body of Christ is necessary (1 Cor. 12:12-26); none is to be despised or hindered from having his part in the general work of building up the Body in the most holy faith. The Apostle illustrates that the eye cannot say to the hand or the foot, "I have no need of you;" and contrariwise the hand or the foot cannot say that it has no need of the eye nor of the ear. Every member is necessary; and above all every member of the Body is to move only in accord with the will of the Head. And that will is to be sought for in every incident of life, great or small. We are not to think of the Lord's cause as being wholly dependent upon us. We are to remember the mistake which Uzzah made—When he saw the ark of the Lord jostled in the road, he put forth his hand to steady it, and died because of his disobedience. It was not in his province to steady the ark. The Lord had that matter under his own supervision, and only the priest might even touch it. Let us all then be zealous, not only to serve the Lord, but also to know the way in which he would have us render that service. Let us be sure that service rendered in any other way than as divinely directed will not be acceptable and will not bring blessing upon us, but on the contrary bring us the Lord's proportionate disfavor. Obedience is better than sacrifice.

THE SLAUGHTER OF THE AMALEKITES

Evidently quite a number of years intervened between the incidents to which we have just referred and those which constitute the main part of today's lesson—King Saul's second test. In the interim Israel had grown strong as a nation; and the time had come for the carrying out of a divine declaration made long before; namely, that the Amalekites should be utterly destroyed. As one branch of Esau's family, they were related to the Israelites and to the Arabs of today. Like the latter they were horsemen, and a kind of brigand, who flourished by pillaging their neighbors. Not strong enough themselves to injure the Israelites they associated themselves with others of the enemies of Israel, either directly participating in war or indirectly, following after battles to gather up the spoils. It will be remembered that they fought against the Israelites in the wilderness when on their way toward Canaan. (Exod. 17:8-16.) It will be remembered also that they again opposed the Israelites in conquering the land of promise; and that the Lord had declared through Moses that these should be utterly destroyed, and had given Israel this command.—Deut. 25:17-19.

The fulfilling of these commands was deferred, probably for two reasons. First, the Israelites had no cavalry and would have found it difficult to cope with these marauders, who would swoop down upon them and be off. Secondly, it is probable that the Lord permitted the Amalekites to continue as a thorn in the side of the Israelites for their chastening. But now in Samuel's day the message came to King Saul to destroy utterly the Amalekites, not only all the people, great and small, but all of their belongings—sheep, cattle, horses—everything. The Israelites were to do this as the sword of the Lord, as inflicting the judgment which God had decreed. It must not be said of them that they had turned brigands and thieves, to war against their neighbors and to profit by their pelf. This must be a witness not only to the nations round about, but to the Israelites themselves; it must be a lesson. They must not get the impression that warfare against their neighbors would be undertaken for any selfish, mercenary motives. They were God's scourge in this instance. We are not to draw the inference that today God gives any command to any nation to blot out another people. We are to remember, on the contrary, that Israel was a picture-nation, a type nation; and that through their experience and history the Lord dealt peculiarly to illustrate principles; that he used Israel as his sword, as his pen, as his mouthpiece.

NOT TO AN ETERNAL DOOM

Infidels hold this experience of the Israelites with the Amalekites as an awful picture of cruelty, entirely opposed to justice; and earnest, honest minds have stumbled through a misapprehension of the principles involved. Many would be inclined to say, "Why did not God send Saul and the Israelites with the Gospel to preach to the Amalekites? Why

did he send Israel to destroy their lives, and thus to end their probation and thrust them into eternal torment?"

We answer that eternal torment had nothing whatever to do with their case; for God has made no such threat and inflicts no such penalty for their sin, nor for any sin. According to the Scriptures, "The wages of sin is death." (Rom. 6:23.) And death was the wage which God authorized Israel to inflict upon the Amalekites, a death penalty. Their execution was along exactly the same lines as courts of justice today command the execution of murderers, except that in this case the Lord himself acted as judge of the court, read the decision and imposed the penalty.

The Israelites preached the Gospel to nobody, because no Gospel could be preached until first of all Christ had come and had paid the penalty for Adam's sin. On the basis of that work of Christ, God commands all men everywhere to repent, because he has appointed a day of trial, a day of judgment. (Acts 17:31.) God did not end their day of trial; for it had not yet come to them. Like all the remainder of the race they were under death sentence for Adam's sin, and it matters not to justice how they die, whether of pestilence or of general decay or by the sword. The fact that their death was a divine punishment, was better shown by their execution in harmony with the divine command, than had it come upon them in some other manner. The incident furnished a lesson to typical Israel, as it still furnishes a lesson to Spiritual Israel. Those Amalekites, let us remember, were all redeemed by the provision of God's love, by the death of Jesus. In due time they are all to have the testimony that Christ died for their sins, and to have the opportunity during the Millennial age day, the world's judgment day, to return to full harmony with God and to live.

KING SAUL'S SECOND TEST

That a good many years had passed, and that King Saul had made good use of his opportunities as an organizer of the kingdom, is evidenced by the fact that a large army was assembled in harmony with the Lord's command to the prophet: "Two hundred thousand footmen and ten thousand men of Judah." This army was evidently so disposed of as to intercept any of the Amalekites who might flee. Meantime word was sent to the Kenites, who dwelt amongst the Amalekites, advising them to leave that they might not suffer in the punishment of the Amalekites; and the explanation made was that as the Kenites had favored the Lord's people, they were spared in recognition of this fact; for the destruction of the Amalekites was in harmony with the divine decree, because of their opposition to Israel.

The people were all slaughtered except the King, whom King Saul spared, keeping him as a kind of trophy. The animals also were all destroyed, except the choicest of the flocks and herds, which additionally was contrary to the divine command.

When the prophet Samuel came to the king, the latter saluted him as God's representative and reported that he had done according to the divine command. Then came the inquiry, "If so, what means the bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the cattle?" Saul's answer was probably a prevarication; that these were kept in order to be offered to the Lord in sacrifice. Then Samuel reproved him, pointing out that he had violated the command of the Lord in preserving any of them. The king, however, protested that the people had kept them; that Israel had desired them; and we can readily suppose that there would have been amongst the Israelites quite an opposition to the waste of the good things of the Amalekites, so accustomed were people of that time, as well as of today, to desire valuables. Saul might have indeed complied with the divine decree by rendering obedience to the Lord and thus put himself in disfavor with the people; but he would have maintained the divine approval thereby. As it was, the prophet expressed the divine disapproval, saying, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken (better) than the fat of rams."

TESTS OF THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

Let us see if there are not corresponding tests upon the royal priesthood. Frequently tests come to this class after they have been a long while in the school of Christ. Speaking to some such, the Apostle says, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers ye have need that one teach you again what be the first principles of the oracles of God," the doctrines (teachings) of Christ. (Heb. 5:12.) We are sometimes surprised at others, sometimes at ourselves, that we have been so slow in making progress; that we have apparently gained so little victory in character building and appreciation of the principles which should govern

amongst those who are the Lord's anointed and in preparation for the throne. Saul's difficulty and tests may represent some of ours.

(1) A selfish spirit, a desire for some of the best of the things which the Lord has condemned; a willingness to spare these because they appeal to us from a selfish viewpoint, the fleshly viewpoint.

(2) A man-fearing spirit. As Saul feared to bring upon himself the reproaches of the people, fearing to be thought too narrow on the one hand and too wasteful on the other, so a temptation comes to the Lord's people to guide their course not entirely by the Word of the Lord, but with a deference to the sentiments of others. This is the fear of man that brings a snare. (Prov. 29:25.) We are ensnared by the spirit of the world. Of such the Lord says, "How can ye believe [continue in proper discipleship] which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?"—John 5:44.

(3) Saul's third difficulty was that he had too slack an appreciation of the Lord's Word; and this is the difficulty which specially besets nearly every one of the Lord's followers who stray away into error of doctrine or of conduct. With what care ought we to guard ourselves, lest having become partakers of so great a blessing as our anointing implies, any of us should seem to come short in its glorious realization in the kingdom. Let us see to it that we put away all love of sin in its every form, and that we esteem the Lord's favor so highly that the consideration of human friendships would not have a particle of weight or influence with us, except as the same should be in full accord with the divine programme; and in order to the maintenance of these proper relationships, let us take heed to his Word.

Let us remember the Apostle's words that we wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with wicked spirits in high positions. (Eph. 6:12.) Let us remember that these wicked spirits have the power in some degree to favor in us wrong sentiments; that in proportion as we would give our minds into any selfish, sinful or ignoble channel, in that same proportion these unseen adversaries of the saints would have power over them. Let us remember, on the contrary, that in proportion as our hearts are loyal to the Lord and his Word and to the spirit of the truth, the spirit of love, in that same proportion we are surrounded by a halo of influence which would protect us, so that of such it may be written, "The wicked one toucheth him not."—John 5:18.

THE TEST OF PERFECT LOVE

The Scriptures clearly indicate a great trial and testing for the Church in the next few years. It will determine with very many what Saul's testing determined for him, whether or not God's favor will continue, with its kingdom privileges and opportunities. To the faithful the Lord says, "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." The others will be answered as was Saul, "Obedience is better than sacrifice;" thou art rejected. Through the Revelator the Lord tells us how the Philadelphia stage of the church would be saved from the great "hour of trial that is come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." (Rev. 3:10.) There are trials coming upon the Laodicean church, living at the time of the presence of the Son of Man, when he stands at the door and knocks. (Rev. 3:20.) In that trial, we are told, that a thousand shall fall at the side and ten thousand at the right hand of the one body, the true church, of which Jesus is the Head. The Apostle Peter, in figurative language, describes the heavens as being on fire (2 Pet. 3:12), symbolically picturing the ecclesiastical influence of our day; and St. Paul tells of the "fire that shall try every man's work of what sort it is." (1 Cor. 3:13.) We are assured that only the gold, silver and precious stones of the divine character and doctrine will abide the fiery ordeal. Surely none of the Lord's people can afford to ignore such testings as these; particularly none of those who with us believe that we are now in that trial period; and that the next seven years will be preëminently a testing time.

If the test of character approved of God, is love—perfect love for God, for the brethren, yea, also for our enemies—then let that thought be continually before all of our minds to the intent that we be not overtaken, that we be not deceived by the great adversary, who still would fain put darkness for light and light for darkness, on this as upon every other subject. Our anticipation is that the great conflict which will ultimately reach the world, and eventuate in the anarchy which will overthrow all law and order, will begin with the church; begin with the consecrated, the sanctified, the enlightened. Does not the Lord forewarn us,

that in all things judgment must begin at the house of God? (1 Pet. 4:17.) Necessarily it must begin with those who are highest up in that house as respects light, knowledge and privileges.

Are we prepared for these tests, of which we read that they would deceive, if it were possible, the very elect? We still believe that these tests will be along the lines of perfect love. Love and selfishness are the two great powers that are moving the world and each individual therein. We have already seen that the selfishness, which will overwhelm the world shortly, will mean lovelessness to the extent that the Scriptures declare, "Every man's hand shall be against his neighbor, and no peace to him that goeth out nor to him that cometh in." (Zech. 8:10; 11:6.) Is that same condition of things to be expected in the church—every man's hand against his neighbor, the tongue of every brother against every other brother in the Lord? Are anger, malice, hatred, envy and strife to be permitted to overwhelm the church of Christ? Could such things have any place or power of influence against those who have knowledge of the truth? We are of the opinion that this is just what we are to expect.

We are in the habit of supposing that our Lord's words, "Brother shall deliver up brother to death," applied merely to our Lord's time and during the dark ages. Do we forget that similar conditions may be expected in the end of this age? The delivering up may not be physical, however; the crucifying, the scourging and the roasting may not be literal; but we believe that very much the same things may be expected with only such limits as our civilization will compel. Apparently it is not enough of a test to us to be "hated of all men for my name's sake." We must be tested by the hatred, the malice, the evil speaking and evil surmising of those who dipped with us in the dish, of those who partook with us of the present things of divine bounty at the table of the Lord, the spiritual food. Ah! If this be so then we may indeed expect for the closing days of the church, the body of Christ, experiences not dissimilar to those which came to the Master in Gethsemane, one of the most trying of which must have been the Judas kiss.

BRETHREN, WHAT SHALL WE DO?

When some of those who heard the Apostles on Pentecost day came to an understanding of what was the real situation of affairs, and that they and their rulers had crucified the Prince of Life—some of them actually and some of them by failing to protest—those who were right-minded were cut to the heart and cried out, "What must we do?" The Apostle assured them of forgiveness because they did it ignorantly. And so with us. If any of us find that under any snare, or delusion of the Adversary, we have been entrapped into wrong-doing toward a brother, we should immediately feel cut to the heart, and should go to the Lord for divine forgiveness and to those whom we have wronged, for their part of it, that thus we might turn defeat in the hands of the adversary to victory.

Undoubtedly just such a storm is coming; and as the prophet expresses it, the question is not, Who shall fall, but "Who shall be able to stand?" (Mal. 3:2.) A thousand shall fall to one who will stand. The very elect will not be deceived, but the question is, Are we of the very elect? and our answer must be that the Lord will decide this matter according to the manner in which we decide when under the test. It is impossible for us to surmise what may be the various apparent grounds for unbrotherliness, for the loss of a brother's love. If we give heed to the adversary, he will make us think it proper to break away from the regular rule of procedure, and, if we are willing, make us to feel that we are fully justified in violating all the various directions which the Lord our God has given us. It will require of all of us loving faithfulness to the Lord and to the brethren to enable us to withstand the trials of this day; and we cannot at this point refrain from reminding the dear followers of the Lord afresh of what we have already amplified in DAWN-STUDIES, Vol. VI, Chap. 9, the course which the new creature should take in every matter in which he feels that a brother has offended him, outlined by our Lord in Matt. 18:15-17.

Let us be sure that the adversary will use every means to turn us aside from this plainly stated rule of love; that he will endeavor to make us think that it cannot be applicable to the difficulty which troubles us. Let our answer to all such suggestions of Satan be, "Get thee behind me." We write thus pointedly, because in various parts we have intimations from the brethren of misunderstandings and in some instances the manifestation of a loveless spirit, a hypercritical spirit, an unbrotherly spirit, a spirit in direct opposition to the

Golden Rule and to the Lord's instructions, to go to him alone, to seek to win thy brother, and not to cast him off nor excommunicate him. On the contrary, be ready to die for him. "We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren."—1 John 3:16.

Let us remember, also, that this loveless condition of the heart, this hypercritical spirit, does not come in suddenly; it develops gradually. Hence every day each of the Lord's people should have a searching of his heart to see whether or not he can find there toward anybody, saint or sinner, any of the spirit of malice which the Lord figuratively represented as leaven, contaminating in its influence. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." (1 Cor. 5:6.) A little

envy, a little malice, a little anger, a little hatred, and a little strife, may leaven our hearts completely, and in a comparatively short time turn the sweets of our new nature, the spirit of love, into acid bitterness. Moreover, the leaven is not likely to be confined to one, but spreads to others; and thus many may be defiled. The poet has said:—

"We are not worst at once;

The course of evil begins so slowly, and from such slight sources,

An infant's hand might stem its breach with clay;

But let the stream get deeper, and philosophy,

Ah! and religion, too, shall strive in vain

To turn the headlong current."

GOD'S CHOICE

1 Samuel 16:1-13.—AUGUST 2.

Golden Text:—"Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."—V. 7.

The record is, "Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death." That is to say, God having cut off Saul from special guidance and relationship, it was no longer Samuel's province as God's representative to go frequently to him to give direction respecting the interests of the kingdom. The record, however, implies that Samuel had great sympathy for Saul and mourned for him. So it is sometimes with the Lord's children of this Gospel dispensation. We feel a deep interest in matters and persons of our intimate association, and at times might almost be tempted to think that the Lord had made some mistake in his dealings with them—especially if they be near and dear to us by the ties of blood or fellowship. It is for us to learn, as did Saul, not to question the ways of the Lord, but to rely upon his unerring wisdom in the management of his own cause. With a slight reproof the Lord sent Samuel to anoint Saul's successor, saying, "Fill thine horn with oil and go; I will send thee to Jesse, the Bethlehemite, for I have provided me a king amongst his sons." So sometimes, when our hopes and aims have failed us, the Lord bids us look in another direction and to behold that he is not dependent upon any, but is supervising his own cause, working his sovereign will. He has sent us a message which, rightly appreciated, should give us comfort amongst all the discouragements that might come to us. That message reads, "My word that goeth out of my mouth shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish that which I please, and shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." The poet has expressed the same thought saying,

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform."

THE TRUTH—NOT THE WHOLE TRUTH

Samuel was a wise man, and knew instinctively that while Saul had been ready enough to receive the anointing himself he would never consent to have another anointed as his successor in the kingdom, but would desire to retain the authority, the position, for the members of his own family. He therefore replied to the Lord, "How can I go?" Will not my mission be interrupted if Saul learns of my intention, and I shall not even have the opportunity to carry it out, for he will kill me, and justify his action under the plea that I was a traitor to the king. The Lord replied, "Take an heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice unto the Lord."

Many of the Lord's dear people, evidently lacking a proper balance of mind on this subject, would be inclined to repudiate such an avowal as being a lie—an untruth. Their argument would be, No, Samuel's real purpose and the Lord's was that he should anoint a king, and the offering by sacrifice was merely a subterfuge and misrepresentation—a falsehood out of the whole cloth. Among such, hesitancy to brand such a course as both speaking and acting a lie, would merely be because it was the Lord who gave this direction and his inspired prophet who carried it out; but the principle involved is the same whoever may be the ones carrying it out. If such a course had been wrong for Samuel or for any other man, it would have been still more wrong for the Almighty God. But if, as we claim, it was right and proper for the Almighty, it would be an equally proper course for any one to take.

It would not have been proper to say that he was going to sacrifice if there had been no intention to sacrifice, but merely to anoint! As a matter of fact, the sacrifice was the whole purpose of the visit, so far as the people of Bethlehem were concerned, the matter of anointing being purely the Lord's business and that of Jesse and his family. As the

anointing was none of the business of the people of Bethlehem, it was entirely proper that it should not be mentioned to them. Our Lord followed the same course during his ministry, telling facts only in part. Sometimes he spake in parables, that the multitude might hear and not understand the true import of his message, and this he explained to the apostles saying, "To you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but unto outsiders these things are done in parables, that seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand." (Mark 4:11, 12.) Again he said to the disciples, "I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now." (John 16:12.) It is a great mistake, therefore, to suppose that it is wrong to withhold a part of the truth, if it is withheld for the benefit of the hearer; if the whole truth would do injury, then it is the course of wisdom and love to withhold the injurious element. But if, on the contrary, we should withhold truth from selfish motives, and to the injury of other men, the course would be reprehensible, contrary to the law of love. To see this principle will be very helpful to many of the Lord's people, and will assist them in appreciating and acting upon the Master's words, "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves."

"COMEST THOU PEACEABLY?"

In fulfilment of the Lord's will Samuel went to Bethlehem. So great was the reverence for him as the Lord's prophet and ex-judge that the elders of the city came to meet him, trembling and fearing that he had come with some message of denunciation from the Lord, to reprove some wickedness, to show up some graft, to pronounce some penalty. All this implies that the people had great confidence in the prophet as God's mouthpiece and great respect and reverence for the Lord, etc., and that the rule of God through the judges had deeply impressed certain lessons.

In reply to the query, "Comest thou peaceably?"—does your coming mean judgments of the Lord upon us or blessings—Samuel replied: I am come peaceably to sacrifice unto the Lord; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice. Amongst others he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice. The sacrificing represented an acknowledgment of sin and thankfulness to the Lord for his mercy in respect to it, and in general a consecration of obedience to the Lord. A certain portion of the sacrifice was usually burned unto the Lord and another portion of it was eaten by the participants, as representing the reception of the blessings. The account is evidently not a complete one. We may suppose that after all who wished to draw near unto the Lord through the sacrifice had attended, and that matter and the feast were entirely at an end, Samuel went with Jesse to his home and there looked over his sons, waiting for guidance from the Lord as to which of them should be anointed.

"THE LORD LOOKETH UPON THE HEART"

Apparently Jesse had been asked to send his sons one by one to the prophet and they came, the elder first. When Samuel looked upon Eliab he said within himself, Surely the Lord's anointed is before me; but the Lord answered, "Look not on his countenance, neither on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." What a wonderful lesson is here applicable to every member of the human family! The Lord Jesus used nearly similar language, saying, "That which is highly esteemed amongst men is an abomination in the sight of the Lord." (Luke 16:15.) Judge not by outward appearance. Saul in outward appearance was handsome, and head and shoulders above the majority of the people of Israel. The Lord permitted him to be chosen king,

and gave an exhibition of the fact that outward appearance is not always a sure token of the attitude of heart pleasing to him. So seven of Jesse's sons passed before Samuel, and the Lord rejected all of them; there was some unfitness at the core, at the heart, which was not apparent to the outward observer, who like Samuel, would have concluded otherwise. Then Samuel, evidently surprised, said to Jesse, "Are here all thy children?" and he replied, "There remainest yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep." And Samuel said, "Send and fetch him, for we will not sit down until he come hither, and he sent and brought him." The youngest son was David, and we read, "He was ruddy, and withal of beautiful countenance and goodly to look upon." The description is thought to indicate that David was fair-complexioned and of auburn hair. It is supposed that he was in his eighteenth year.

"ANOINT HIM, FOR THIS IS HE"

The Lord said to Samuel, "Arise, and anoint him, for this is he. Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brethren." The question properly arises here. Why did the Lord choose David instead of one of his brethren or some other man of the nation? That there was a definite, positive choice cannot be questioned; and a similar choice on the Lord's part in other cases is scripturally noted. For instance, the Apostle Paul calls attention to the fact that Isaac and not Ishmael was the promised seed of Abraham, and that Jacob and not Esau was chosen amongst his seed, and that this choice was indicated before their birth, saying, "The elder shall serve the younger." We are bound to suppose from all the information granted us, that the Lord in times past, while recognizing the free will, the free agency of every human being, has nevertheless, to some extent, interposed in some instances to grant prenatal influences helpful to the development of such characters as he desired for his service. This same thought is brought to our attention in connection with the birth of John the Baptist, and the declaration of a prenatal influence in that case. Similarly the Apostle Paul calls attention to the fact that the Lord chose him from his mother's womb. To our understanding this signifies that divine wisdom and power supervised the influences which more or less controlled his mother's mind during the period of gestation, and which impressed a certain amount of character upon the babe. This, as we have already pointed out in (*DAWN-STUDIES*, Vol. VI.), should stimulate parents to give to their offspring the very best possible mental endowment—as respects justice, wisdom, love, and all the finer qualities of disposition. Were all children so born, while it would never entirely take away the taint of sin and imperfection, never produce perfect children, because none can bring a clean thing out of an unclean, it would, however, mean a great blessing for the human family, a great uplift.

Nothing in connection with what we have suggested implies an interference with the human will, but merely the preparation of a better-balanced and constituted mind. It was still possible for St. Paul to repel all the grace of God—not only that received through prenatal influences, but also that received through the varying experiences by which the Lord subsequently led him and under which the Apostle, by faith and consecration, was accepted as a prospective joint-heir with Christ in the kingdom. As the Apostle himself declared, it would still have been possible, after preaching the Gospel to others, for himself to become a castaway. (1 Cor. 9:27.) And so it is with us. The preparation, the information and the call and the subsequent supervision of our best interests, all leave our wills inviolate and permit us, if we choose, to reject the Lord's favor.

In no other manner than the one we have suggested could we account for some of the wonderful characters of Scriptural history—Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah, John the Baptist, the Apostle Paul and others. We may not even surely know that the Lord's providence did not affect Pharaoh by some prenatal influence, which tended to make him stubborn to the last degree, in harmony with the Scriptures which say, "For this very purpose have I raised thee up [to the throne] that I might show forth my power in thee"—in a manner that could not be shown forth had a man of different natural disposition been in the throne.

Subsequently history shows that David's brethren did not understand that he had been anointed to be king. Samuel may have let Jesse into the secret, and may subsequently have whispered something to David on the subject; but most evidently the matter was kept a profound secret, with the understanding that David's anointing would give him no authority of kingship until in the providence of God the authority should be fully taken from the hands of Saul and put into

David's hands; and with the full understanding also that David himself was to have nothing whatever to do with grasping the power. His anointing was a prophecy respecting his future, and also a type of the anointing of the Christ. David's brethren may have thought of the anointing as signifying that their brother was designed eventually to become a prophet of the Lord instead of Samuel at the death of the latter; or they may have understood it as meaning some special blessing in connection with the sanctifying and sacrificing in which they themselves had participated. Certain it is that the youthful David conducted himself most modestly, most becomingly, and that the experiences through which he subsequently passed in the Lord's providence in following his vocation were very helpful to him, fitting and preparing him for the office of king, which came to him in due time.

THE CHURCH, THE ANTITYPICAL DAVID

The name David signifies beloved, and as such well represents the Christ, Head and body. Of him it is written, "God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." (Psa. 45:7.) When in due time God sent forth his Son to be the world's Redeemer and anointed King and Restorer, divine Providence ordered that he should be born in the same city of David—Bethlehem. He also had a humble position amongst all those of his time; his brethren of the Jewish nation considered him one of the least fitted to be the Deliverer—"They hid, as it were, their faces from him"—in shame. He was anointed of the Lord, however, to be the Deliverer; not only were the angels of heaven passed by, but also the great ones of earth. Neither did he begin his reign immediately after being anointed with the Spirit; rather he needed first various testings, trials, provings such as came to the typical David. And the same principle obtains in respect to all of the church, his body. Little known, not highly esteemed amongst men, not many of them great, wise or noble, the Lord is anointing all of the David class, the beloved class in the present time. They do not at once begin to reign, but do at once enter a school of experience designed by their Father to be helpful in preparing them for the duties and privileges of the kingdom when the due time shall come for the kingdom to be given to them. The world knoweth us not, saith the Apostle. Very true. They know not that we are anointed. Indeed, even many of our brethren who perceived the anointing know not what it signifies; they perceive not that we are anointed to be kings and joint-heirs with our Redeemer. However, the matter is communicated to us; as the Apostle declares, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye all know it." (1 John 2:20.) Under this unction, this blessing of the Lord, we are to develop more and more in preparation for our position of royalty, to which we shall attain in our change in the First Resurrection.

"FROM THAT DAY FORWARD"

"And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward." We are not to understand from this that David was begotten of the holy Spirit, as are the members of the body of Christ, the church, during this Gospel age. No; ours is a special and peculiar blessing from the Lord, the like of which never came before Pentecost, except in the one case of our Lord's baptism of the Spirit at Jordan, when he received the holy Spirit without measure. The Spirit, influence, power of God upon David was similar in its operation and effect to what it had been upon Samuel and the prophets. Undoubtedly it gave him wisdom, strength and courage and enabled him wisely to appropriate to himself the various opportunities for the learning of the imperfect lessons in connection with his daily experiences, all of which were a schooling or preparation for his future work as king.

Similarly, only in a higher and fuller sense and degree, the Lord's people of this Gospel age, from the time they come under the influence of the holy Spirit of begetting, which was poured upon the Church at Pentecost—from that time onward they should be exercised by this Spirit of the Lord, and, as the Apostle expresses it, should be filled with the Spirit, "filled with all the fulness of God," filled more and more with a knowledge of God's will and with the spirit of obedience thereto. This feeling increases as we receive of the holy Spirit, and as it abounds and is shed forth in our hearts we are enlightened; our appreciation of God, our appreciation of our own privileges, our appreciation of his calling us to the high position of joint-heirship with Jesus and our appreciation of the necessity for learning the lessons which would fit us for that glorious position, is increased.

Apropos of God's choice of David rather than any of his brethren the *Sunday School Times* remarks:—

"Never forget for a moment that no face can be so beautiful, or any form so divine, but that a bad heart or a wicked heart may make it hateful or worthless. In such beauty there

is always a cloud, a film, a veil. Through all its masks and shams the gaze of God goes straight to the heart and soul.

"It often happens that men neglect the very person, young or poor or obscure, whom God has chosen for highest honor; but whoever men may choose to crown, the real feast cannot

proceed till God's candidate has been discovered. Sometimes our stupid wits never make the discovery, and the coronation of God's saints and heroes is reserved for the day of surprises in heaven. Let us try to honor men as God honors them!"—*Dr. Bushnell.*

WHAT A VOW SIGNIFIES

It is not remarkable that the adversary and the deceitfulness of our own flesh should conspire to hinder every work of grace, and of course present arguments, and if possible Scripture proofs. Let us not be deceived thereby, but take our stand firmly for truth and righteousness, and for everything which would protect the brethren and honor the Lord's cause. We state and answer the objections to the Vow as follows:—

(1) To take a vow is to swear, and we are cautioned, "Swear not at all."

This is a mistake; a vow is not an oath, but a *solemn affirmation*. It is suggested to be made not to man but to God. It is in full accord with the Scripture, which says, "Pay thy vows unto the Lord." How could one pay his vows if he never made any, or if it were wrong to make such vows?

(2) To make such a vow is to put one's self under the law; and the Apostle says, "If ye be under the law Christ shall profit you nothing."

This is also an error. Christians are under God's law in the sense that they have agreed to do his will in all things to the extent of their ability. "The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who are walking not after the flesh but after the Spirit." The vow proposed is merely to assist in this walk, and is in full accord with St. Paul's exhortation, "Make straight paths for your feet lest that which is lame be turned out of the way." We have pointed out that the world's path will be very crooked indeed during the next few years, and hence the greater need of such a vow to help those in the narrow way. The Apostle reproved those who sought to *justify themselves* by keeping the Law, ignoring Christ. This vow acknowledging Christ and our justification through faith in the blood of Christ, is to assist us in following in his steps.

(3) The vow I took in consecration includes all that this proposed vow sets forth.

This is true in a certain sense; and to that extent it surely is not objectionable. Our vow of consecration really meant the doing of anything that would honor our Lord or assist the brethren—even to the extent of laying down life itself. It equally meant the avoidance of anything which would injure the Lord's cause or possibly stumble the brethren. Hence our consecration vow indirectly covers all that the proposed vow includes and excludes, and those who see it thus need not hesitate to take the proposed vow.

The Word of God forbids adultery, fornication, lasciviousness or uncleanness in thought, word and act, and all this we clearly understood when we made our consecration vow. But the Scriptures nowhere forbid a pure, "holy kiss," nor stipulate other items of the proposed vow; hence we had not these in mind when we made the consecration. But as that vow included our all, even unto death, it really included the new vow, which is really another item of our *self-sacrifice*, made in the interest of the general cause, and likely to prove beneficial to ourselves also.

Our space permits the publication of only a few of the many encouraging letters received on this subject from both brothers and sisters.

My Dear Brother Russell:—

It seems to me the most timely article that has ever appeared in the WATCH TOWER is the one in the June 15th number, under the caption, "Pay thy vows unto the Lord." I have wondered at times where this fleshly manifestation of love between opposite sexes would end, but I thank the Lord now that I believe nearly all, if not all, will end in all who are truly his taking the proposed *vow*. I am positive the dear friends have had not the least evil motive, and rejoice that the Lord has moved you to present the matter in so loving a manner, together with the suggestion of the vow, which should prove an impregnable barrier against further besetments along this line.

This is to advise you that I have with much appreciation made this vow to the Lord. I have taken it in the name of Christ our Lord, whose strength is sufficient in *every* time of need. The Lord bless thee and keep thee and all thy house. With fervent love, yours faithfully in Christ,

JOHN HOSKINS,—*Minn.*

Dearly Beloved Pastor:—

The contents of June 15th TOWER have brought great joy to my heart, and I believe it pleasing to the Lord to express my appreciation of the same to you personally.

In Louisville, last April, Brother Rutherford so kindly told me of the "Pilgrim vow," which by the Lord's favor came to me at the "due time," when he had prepared my heart to receive it as the blessed privilege which it is.

How can I express to you the joy and happiness I have experienced in the Lord's love and favor since taking this sacred vow before him on April 24th! I do thank the Lord, especially for his surpassing favor in revealing this privilege to me *when* he did. The intervening nine weeks up to the present time have been filled with many lessons in love and humility, revealing an unusual gentleness in his leadings and care for me. May I ever grow in love for him and all of his, never lacking in appreciation of his manifold blessings—always striving to please him.

Our prayers have been with you many times daily, that you may have comfort and strength to perform your vows unto him; thanking him on every remembrance of you for the rich blessings which he has used you to bring to us.

I am confident, dear Brother Russell, that we colporteurs have had your prayers that we, too, may be faithful to our vows in letter and in spirit, even unto the end—which prayers will avail much for us and are a great comfort to our hearts. We grow more thankful each day for our share in the harvest work.

With much love and prayer, I remain, yours in the blessed harvest work,

SISTER ———.

AN INTERESTING LETTER

Dear Brother Russell:—

You have clearly shown that Elijah was a type of the Church in the flesh, and that his 3½ years correspond to the 1260 years of Papacy's power (a day for a year), during which the Church was in the wilderness condition, fed as it were by ravens. (Vol. II., p. 256.) Now I want to ask whether the subsequent experiences of Elijah do not typify some of the experiences of the Church from 1799 to 1914, as follows:

(1) The rain (1 Kings 18:41-45)—spread of truth in publication and dissemination of Bibles and in the organization of Bible Societies.

(2) Slaying of false prophets—overthrow of false doctrines, etc.—1 Kings 18:40.

(3) Subsequent flight to save his life—the complete separation of a class from the power of Jezebel in the interest of the new life, 1829 to 1846, corresponding to the Cleansed Sanctuary Class.—1 Kings 19:1-4; Vol. III., pp. 83-119.

(4) Elijah's first awakening (19:5) corresponds to the spiritual awakening of this class, known as the "Miller Move-

ment." Special food was now due, viz.: the Ransom, the return of our Lord, and an understanding of prophecy.

(5) "Fell asleep." "The Bridegroom tarried, and they all slumbered and slept." (Matt. 25:5.) See Vol. III., pp. 92-93. This covers the period of 1844 to 1874.

(6) Second awakening, 1874 to 1914, during which time all the Elijah class shall be reached (touched) by the angel (messenger) whom the Lord has been using since 1874. This angel is the same one referred to in Rev. 3:14 and Luke 12:42. The food offered is Present Truth. This angel mentions a definite object before us, "a journey," and so the Lord's servant has clearly shown us the hope of our calling—that is, to be joint-heirs with our Lord. Never since the apostles fell asleep has the hope of the Church been as clearly shown as in the DAWNS and TOWERS prepared by this angel. Elijah was told that the "journey is too great for thee" unless strengthened by partaking of the food. So we are assured that only those who now put on the "whole armor of God" can (or rather, *shall*) "stand" and make the journey to the heavenly phase of the kingdom—"the mount of God"