

kingdom than Israel. He proposed to him a kingdom embracing all the nations of the earth, and that he should have the control of all these, and be able to bring in the blessed reforms which were designed of God, only one condition being insisted upon, viz., that whatever kingdom or rule or authority might be established must recognize Satan. The adversary thus seemed to see what he thought a favorable opportunity for consummating his original plans, for we cannot suppose that his original intention was to gain control of a dying and depraved race, but that he much rather would be the lord or ruler of a highly enlightened and well-endowed people. He was willing, therefore, to see carried into effect all the gracious work which God had designed, and willing to reform himself and to become the leader of reform, provided only that he should be recognized as having the chief place of influence in connection with mankind. It was after this manner that he wished our Lord to do worship or reverence to him—to recognize his influence and co-operation in the work, and not for a moment can we suppose that he expected him to kneel before him and to worship him as God.

Our Lord's reply to this last temptation shows that it fully awakened him to a realization of the fact that there was no real reformation at work in Satan's heart; that he was still ambitious, self-seeking, as at the beginning of his downward course; and he realized that to even discuss the matter further with one who had thus avowed his real sentiments would be disloyalty to the Father, and hence his words, "Get thee hence, Satan"—leave me; you cannot co-operate with me at all; my work is in full accord with the absolute standard of the divine will; I can be a party to no program contrary to this, however alluring some of its features might be in promising a speedy conquest of the world, and a speedy establishment of a reign of righteousness and blessing and an avoidance of personal suffering; I cannot serve two masters: I can only recognize the one supreme Jehovah, as Lord of heaven and of earth, and therefore could not recognize you in any position of authority except as the great Jehovah would appoint you to it, which I know he would never do, so long as you are of the present ambitious spirit. I am operating along the line of the declaration, "Thou shalt worship [reverence] the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

We may readily discern that this temptation of our Lord was but a sample illustration of such as beset his followers all along the narrow way, from the same source, directly or through agencies. Satan through his various mouthpieces is continually saying to the saints, Here is a more successful way of accomplishing your object than that which you are pursuing, a more successful way than the Lord's way. Bend a little; make compromise with the worldly spirit; do not hew too close to the line of the word of God and the example of the Lord Jesus and the apostles; you must be more like the world, in order to exert an influence—mix a little into

politics, and a good deal into secret societies; keep in touch with the fads and foibles of the day, and above all things keep any light of present truth under a bushel,—thus alone can you have influence and accomplish your good desires toward men. But our dear Master assures us that we are to be faithful to the Lord and to his plan, and let things work out as best they may along that line; and that we may rest assured that in the end the Father's plan not only is the best but really the only plan for accomplishing his great designs, and that if we would be associated therein with him as collaborators, it must be by recognizing him as our only Master, and with an eye single to his approval.

Our Lord's utter refusal of every other way of carrying out his mission than the one which the Father had marked out, the way of self-sacrifice, the narrow way, was indeed a great victory. The adversary left him, finding nothing in him that he could take hold of or work upon, so thoroughly loyal was he to the very word and the spirit of Jehovah. And then, the trial being ended, we read that holy angels came and ministered to our Lord—doubtless supplying him with refreshment such as he had refused to exercise the divine power to obtain for himself. And such we may recognize as being the experience of our Lord's followers: with victory comes a blessing from the Lord, fellowship of spirit, refreshment of heart, a realization of divine favor that makes stronger for the next trial.

Another lesson here is that temptation does not imply sin. As our Lord was tempted "without sin" so may his brethren be if they follow his example and with purity of heart, purity of intention, seek only the Father's will. Sin could only come through yielding to the temptation. But let us not forget that hesitancy after the wrong is seen increases the power of the temptation. And we may note here that while Satan is tempter, endeavoring to ensnare us into wrong paths and wrong conduct, God is not so; "he tempteth no man" (Jas 1:13), and even tho he permit the Adversary and his agents to beset his people, it is not with the object of ensnaring them, but with the opposite object, that they may by such trials and testings be made the stronger, developing character through exercise in resisting evil. Let us remember too for our strengthening, the Scriptural assurance that God will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to resist and overcome but will with the temptation provide also a way of escape.

To avail ourselves of this provision requires merely faith, and the more we exercise our faith in such matters the more of it we will have, becoming stronger in the Lord and in the power of his might; and thus by divine grace and under the Master's assistance we may come off overcomers—conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood.—2 Cor. 12:9; 1 Cor 10:13; Eph. 6:10; Rom. 8:37-39.

A LITTLE WHILE

A little while with weary feet to tread the narrow way,
A little while, the time will not be long,
A little while the sinless One to follow day by day,
A little while to suffer and be strong.

A little while with faltering tongue to testify for God,
A little while to suffer scorn and shame,
A little while with voice and pen to spread the truth abroad,
A little while to glorify his name

A little while with humble faith to wage the goodly fight,
A little while, grasp firm the two-edged sword,
A little while, Satanic hosts shall all be put to flight,
A little while, then, trust thou in the Lord.

A little while, a little while, Oh, let this be our song,
A little while, lay not the armor down;
A little while, a little while, the strife will not be long,
A little while, and we shall wear the crown!

—GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT.

THE PEOPLE THAT KNOW THE JOYFUL SOUND

"Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance."—Psalm 89:15
Salvation is the joyful sound, as the poet has well expressed it.* saying:

"Salvation! O the joyful sound,
What tidings for our race!
Deliv'rance for the world is found
Through God's abounding grace."

This joyful salvation sound is the Gospel, as declared by the angelic messengers—"Good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people." But alas, how few have heard this joyful sound! As mentally we glance over the sixteen hundred millions of the world's population, we find that even the most extravagant claims would show that not one-fifth of the whole

have ever heard these blessed tidings; the four-fifths are totally blinded by the god of this world, and see nothing and hear nothing of God's grace. And the matter has been as bad as this, or worse proportionately for six thousand years. How we should rejoice that under divine providence we were born in lands where the light of truth sends forth at least a feeble ray, and where many are not totally deaf to "the joyful sound!"

Yet coming to civilized lands, we are surprised, almost appalled, at the gross darkness which beclouds the minds of the people of so-called Christendom, and by the dimness of vision and dullness of hearing of the vast majority in these most favored parts of the earth—of the majority of those whose lines have fallen unto them in pleasant places comparatively. Mentally we see nearly two-thirds of the so-called enlightened

fifth of humanity bowing to the Virgin Mary, addressing her in prayer, and crossing themselves with reverence at the mention of her name, and generally grossly ignorant of the divine character and plan—believers in an eternity of torment for all except those of their own communions, and in long periods of purgatorial agony for the great majority of their members. Heart-sick with the picture, we exclaim, O that these people could hear the joyful sound! for evidently they have at very most merely heard an indistinct strain of it conglomerated with the jargon of Babel's confusion and Satanic discord.

Looking expectantly to the remaining third of the so-called enlightened fifth of humanity, known as "Protestants," we inquire, Are these the blessed people who know the joyful sound? A hundred *discordant* voices answer, Yes! but we inquire, If you have heard it, why such discord, such clashing of doctrines, such separation from each other by creed-fences? Are not all the people who know the joyful sound one people—the one church of the living God, whose names are written in heaven? This at once arouses doubt respecting "Protestantism," and we hearken for evidences to the contrary, that many at least, if not all, know "the joyful sound." We perceive that in many respects amongst these are found people who know more respecting the divine character than do the outside fifteen hundred millions; and yet here also we find great blindness, obscure mental vision, great deafness to the voice from heaven. Truly amongst these also the great adversary has done a work, so that although in their midst more may be heard of "the joyful sound" than amongst other classes of the world, yet Satan has here also introduced the discords so as almost to drown the heavenly music—"the joyful sound." For while to some extent Protestantism discerns God's love and justice, the adversary has blotted out its vision and dulled its hearing for the truth, by whispering theories that are at variance with divine justice and love, and make void and meaningless "the joyful sound." To some he whispers that God never had either sympathy or provision for any except "the elect;" to others he whispers that God has the sympathy for all, but lacks the wisdom and power to give practical assistance to any but the few: and thus in the minds of nearly all "the joyful sound" is reduced to a song of praise and joy and thanksgiving and salvation from a little flock, with which will mingle to all eternity the anguishing wails of the vast majority of thousands of millions.

There are a few (but alas how few!) who not only hear "the joyful sound," but who discern that the discord is of the adversary, and that the joyful sound, if separated from Satanic inharmonies, is beautiful, harmonious beyond any other sound or song. Full of the spirit of the song themselves, they haste to make its beauty known to others, and to point out the origin of the discord. They feel certain that it will be merely necessary to indicate the discord and its source to have others like themselves instantly discern and reject the discord, and rejoice more fully than ever in "the joyful sound"—the true Gospel. But alas! what disappointment is theirs: they find that even amongst the "Protestant" fifteenth of humanity not only is the darkness great, but the depravity of heart and mind are so dense that the darkness and discord are *preferred*, and "the joyful sound," the good tidings of great joy for all people, is spurned, and considered to be the discord that is of the adversary. Only here and there can any be found who "know the joyful sound"—who can distinguish the joyful sound of the heavenly message from those by which Satan has "deceived all that dwell upon the earth."—Rev. 18:23; 19:20:20:3.

SOUNDING THE JUBILEE TRUMPETS

The question may arise, Why did God permit Satan, through his human agencies, to bring false doctrine amongst his people during the dark ages, thus to blind and deafen them to the true light, and the heavenly harmonies of the divine plan?

We answer that God's purpose during this age has been the selection of merely the "little flock" of "overcomers" to be joint-heirs with his Son in the coming Millennial kingdom which is to "bless all the families of the earth;" and by permitting darkness to come upon this nominal church class he has (1) taught a great lesson both to angels and men concerning the necessity of not only starting right, but remaining loyal to the Lord and his Word, and maintaining a teachable attitude of heart. (2) Doubtless the majority of the "little flock" has been selected from the two ends of this Gospel age—its beginning and its closing years. (3) There may have been much more knowledge of the joyful message amongst God's people during "the dark ages" than we now have means of knowing, since the history of that time had few recorders, and their records then dealt chiefly with the error-blinded systems and ignored or misrepresented the unpopular instrumentalities used by God in making "the joyful sound"—some

of whom quite probably were denominated heretics, because they knew the joyful sound of the true Gospel, and proportionately denounced the popular "doctrines of devils."

At all events, under divine providence the joyful sound is now heard above the din of "Babel" by those who "have an ear to hear," and it is found to be the very same gospel which was preached by the Lord and the Apostles and announced by the angels on the plains of Bethlehem—a "joyful sound," "good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people." Moreover, as we have seen in other studies,* we are now in the early dawn of the *Millennial day*, which in the Scriptures was typically represented to Israel by their *Jubilee year*—of release from bondage and the return to original possessions, etc. And as the *priests* were to announce the Jubilee year in the Day of Atonement, by the blowing of silver jubilee trumpets, so here we have the antitype: the royal priests in this, the close of the antitypical Day of Atonement (the Gospel age), are to blow the trumpets of truth (silver being a symbol of truth), announcing to the people that the grace of God is come nigh unto them, and that during the Millennial day (of one thousand years) now dawning the great High Priest, also Prophet and King, shall stand forth as God's representative, and by virtue of his own sacrifice shall give the needed *blessing of knowledge* to all mankind, and shall lift up out of degradation and sin and death, by his providence and grace, all who seek to come back to righteousness and fellowship with the Father through him.

So then, as it was appropriate in the type that this announcement should be made at the close of the Day of Atonement, so that indicated that it is a part of the divine plan that the sounding forth of the joyful sound, the message of the Jubilee of divine love and favor and blessing should be given at the present time—just in the closing days of the Gospel age—the closing hours, so to speak, of the great Day of Atonement,† and at the dawning, so to speak, of the Millennial age of Jubilee.

Now another matter, little in itself, and easily overlooked in our translation of the Bible, is the fact that the very word (*turnah*) used in our text, rendered "a joyful sound," is the same Hebrew word that is used in Lev. 25:9, where the *sounding of the Jubilee trumpet* is commanded. How strikingly the Lord has arranged his Word, to make it a basis for faith and joy to his people. How clear it is to those who "know the joyful sound," and yet how obscure to all others! Well does our text say, "*Blessed* are the people who *know* the joyful sound!" The blessing upon them is certainly not because of their own merit, for we are all conscious of the fact that in our flesh dwelleth no perfection, and that none of us could be commended to God by our own righteousness—all of these blessed people who know the joyful sound have reason, therefore, to give thanks unto him who loved them, and who bought them with his own precious blood, in whose merit alone they have standing with the Heavenly Father. And yet these blessed people have *something* to do with the matter of their blessing—something to do with the fact that they have *heard*, and hearing have *known* or discerned the joyful sound, while others hearing have not discerned it. They have the hearing of faith: from the little which they first heard they must have *cultivated* a love for righteousness, and a hatred of iniquity; they must have *cultivated* honesty with themselves, honesty with the Lord, honesty in handling his Word—"not handling the Word of God deceitfully." (2 Cor. 4:2) They must have consecrated their hearts fully to the Lord, and thus have come fully under the guidance of "the spirit of the truth," else they would not be able to discern better than others between the joyful sound of the truth and the discordant sound of error. Evidently in these we see fulfilled the Scripture, "He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him [to know him, to know his will]."—Heb. 11:6.

THE NEW SONG OF MOSES AND THE LAMB

Our Lord in symbol pointed out to us the fact that the message of his grace in the closing days of this Gospel age would be so different from the commonly accepted message, misnamed the Gospel, that it would properly be termed a *new song*, although it would be the old song of Moses—the message of blessing typified by the writings of Moses and by all the ceremonies of the Law, and the message of the Lamb, the good tidings announced in connection with our Lord's birth, and throughout his own ministry, when all the people "bare him record, and wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth" (not threats of eternal torment to nine-tenths of the human family); and the testimony of all the apostles respecting the Lamb of God and the great work to be accomplished by him in taking "away the sin of the world." It is

* See *MILLENNIAL DAWN*, VOL. II, Chap. 6
† *Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices*

merely this same song that is now being sung by those whom God has blessed with a knowledge of present truth—it is “the joyful sound” which only the people thus blessed *know* or can sing.

It is a worldly proverb that truth is stranger than fiction, yet this proverb is illustrated throughout “Christendom” today—the vast, vast majority of professed followers of Christ are strangers to the truth, but thoroughly familiar with the fictions of human invention—“traditions of the elders,” which “make void the Word of God.” It is in full accord with this that the angel declares to the Revelator that no man can learn to sing this song except the elect—the 144,000, the “little flock.” (Rev. 14:3) Indeed, nothing is more manifest than that it is necessary to be somewhat of an “overcomer” of the world and its spirit which pervades nominal Christendom, ere any would have the courage to sing this song—to declare before men the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the goodness and grace of the divine plan, of which Jesus and his sacrifice are the center. To all others “the fear of man bringeth a snare,” and stoppeth their mouths from speaking “forth the praise of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.” “But the people that *do know* their God [his character and plan] shall be valiant and do exploits,” and like the apostles of old will feel and say, “Whether it be right to obey God or men, judge ye; but we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.”—Dan. 11:32; Acts 4:19, 20.

Nor need we suppose that the fact that only the 144,000 can sing this song implies that those able to sing the song could not fall from their steadfastness and become castaways, and lose the privilege of singing it. On the contrary, the Scriptures most distinctly assure us that only by *unceasing* faithfulness will any be permitted to continue to be reckoned as members of that elect company, foreknown and prearranged of God. Our Lord clearly intimates that he will blot out the names of those who are unfaithful that other names may be written in their stead. He clearly intimates that unfaithfulness will cause that the crown set apart for the faithful will, if he prove unfaithful, be given to another.—Rev. 3:5, 11.

THE WALK OF THE BLESSED PEOPLE

In harmony with the foregoing is the intimation of our text which implies that in order to be of the people who will

know the joyful sound it will be necessary to “walk in the light of God’s countenance.” Or, reversing the statement, the thought is that all who walk in the light of God’s countenance shall be his blessed people, and shall know the joyful sound.

What a lesson of holiness is here: not a lesson of human perfection and self-commendation to God, but a lesson of *abiding in Christ* under the robe of his righteousness, and of walking continuously *with him* and in the path of the just, which “shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” And whoever would walk with Jesus in the light of divine favor, in the smile of divine approval, must needs walk the narrow way of self-control and self-sacrifice—“even unto death.” Whoever delights in sin and sinful practices cannot walk in the company of Jesus, cannot be recognized as a member of his body or under his robe—can have neither part nor lot in this matter, whatever may be done with him or for him in the future age. As the Apostle expresses it, those accepted of Christ, and who would maintain affiliation with him, must remember that all of the “royal priesthood” are given the truth, not to make them vain or boastful, or heady and high-minded, but to purify them, and to sanctify them. He declares “He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”

A TEXT FOR THE YEAR

We suggest to the friends of the truth the adoption of the precious words of our text as a talisman for the year, if not for the remainder of the pilgrim journey. We believe that these inspired words will help all who understand them to more and more measure up to the divine ideal which they present to our minds: “Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound—they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.”

Another line, in full harmony with this, from the succeeding Psalm, might profitably be added: “Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us.” Only those who see the beauty of the great King, who discern something of his justice, his mercy and love, his wisdom, his power, can clothe their new minds with these glorious graces which more and more shine before our anointed vision as the beauty of the Lord our God. And the more clearly they are discerned, the more faithfully can we copy them, and the better do we love the joyful sound, and the better can we sing the Song of Moses and the Lamb.

THE VOLUNTEER WORK

The open winter has been very favorable to the Volunteer work thus far, but we advise that those who have not already commenced this work make all their preparations for the springtime, when we hope to hear from all, and to have a goodly supply of reading matter ready for their use.

Meantime you will do well to have a meeting, call for en-

listments in the service, appoint a committee with a central head to lay out the work systematically, that all congregations in your city may be served without duplicating, appoint your scribe to communicate with the WATCH TOWER office respecting the number of volunteers, the number of churches, the average attendance of each, and the time for distribution.

WE HAVE FOUND HIM! EUREKA!

FEB. 4.—JOHN 1:35-46.

After his wilderness temptation, Jesus returned to Bethabara, where John was preaching, fully convinced of the character of his mission—that it was not to be after the manner of Satan’s suggestion of worldly methods, leading on to popularity and honor of men—that on the contrary it would be his part to bear witness to the truth in such a truthful and simple manner as would commend it and him to such only as were Israelites indeed. No doubt by this time he saw that before the glorification could come the new Israel must be selected, the “royal priesthood, the holy nation, the peculiar people”—antitypical or spiritual Israel. He had reason to expect that there was at least a remnant of this class in the nation of Israel after the flesh, and although fully realizing that no man could come unto him except the Father which sent him should draw him, he nevertheless recognized the propriety of putting himself in the way of those whom the Father would draw, that he might receive them as quickly and as favorably as possible. Hence his return from the wilderness was to the vicinity of John’s mission work, where not unreasonably he might expect to find some of the Israelites indeed.

Our lesson shows that the Heavenly Father had made use of John the Baptizer’s Mission and had exerted through it a drawing influence upon the hearts of some who by this time were quite ready to learn of Jesus as the Way, the Truth and the Life—the channel of approach to God. The drawing power which the Father exerts during this age is the truth—the knowledge of divine compassion toward mankind manifested through the sending of Messiah to save the people from their sins—to deliver them from the power of sin and Satan, as well as from the death penalty.

It was after our Lord’s return from the wilderness that the

delegation of priests and Levites, sent from Jerusalem, came to John asking, “Who art thou?” to whom he replied that he was not the Christ but merely a forerunner, a herald. To these John pointed out Jesus, saying: “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world,” explaining how he knew Jesus to be the Messiah by a previously appointed sign which God had given him—the descent of the holy Spirit in the form of a dove.—Verses 19-34.

It was the very next day after this testimony to the priests and Levites that John, in the presence of two of his disciples, looking intently upon Jesus as he passed near (no doubt wondering how our Lord’s Messiahship would be made known), exclaimed, “Behold the Lamb of God!” This was the same testimony (only abbreviated) that he had given to the priests and Levites, and which had evidently fallen, in their case, upon dull ears. But note the difference in the case of those who were “Israelites indeed:” the two disciples immediately followed Jesus. John’s testimony became to them the *drawing power of God*, because they were in a condition of heart to be susceptible to that influence. Thus we see clearly illustrated how some are drawn and others are not drawn by the same message, and we see also that the divine drawing does not operate arbitrarily, but in accordance with certain fixed principles pertinent to the divine plan. It was not sufficient that a testimony should be given, it was not sufficient that a curiosity should be aroused; it was necessary additionally that the interest awakened should be so powerful as to lead to action on the part of those who were drawn, as the poet expresses it,

“He drew me, and I followed on.”

The Lord is seeking not merely the curious, but the truth-hungry, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, and for

fellowship with himself, and here, as in every instance, he that seeketh, in this proper attitude of heart, findeth. The two disciples had not followed the Lord far until their faith and zeal began to be rewarded: the Lord turned to them and was the first to speak, and thus he illustrated his own words respecting those drawn of the Father to him, "He that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." Had our Lord not thus condescended it would have been a difficult matter for these humble fishermen to have approached one so far above them in dignity and in appearance—one whom they had just learned was the great Messiah, long promised of God to be the Prince of the kings of the earth. Applying this feature of the lesson to ourselves, and remembering that the Lord is the same yesterday, today and forever, helps us to appreciate his condescension manifested toward all who would come unto the Father through him—we who now come to him because of the hearing of faith and the sight of faith, as well as those who then approached him because of the sight of the natural eye and the hearing of the natural ear.

Our Lord's salutation, "What seek ye?" not only overcame the diffidence of those who sought him, but the more they would consider his words subsequently, the more meaningful they would find them, as we do today. And this seems to be the question which the Lord puts to all those who approach him, and essay to become his followers, "What seek ye?" Are you seeking loaves and fishes of earthly advantage? Are you seeking earthly honor and social and political influence and preferment? The answer soon or later will be manifested by the conduct of the seekers, though evidently all do not realize, at the time, what are their real motives in seeking the Lord. It were better, however, that each should remember our Lord's own expression on this subject, and sit down and count the cost at the very beginning—that each one should learn that to seek the Lord truly is to seek after righteousness, fellowship with the Father and with the Son; and that this means the forsaking of sin, so far as the heart is concerned, and so far as possible the purifying of the flesh by the "washing of water through the Word."—Eph. 5:26.

All should learn also that seeking to be disciples of Christ implies not only a fellowship with him in the glory that is soon to be revealed, but also a fellowship with him in the sufferings of this present time—a "filling up of that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." If, as our Lord suggested, each one would sit down and count the cost beforehand, there would be less subsequent disappointment, and although the number of his followers would be much smaller, there would be many less "tares" amongst the "wheat," and this would mean the better spiritual prosperity of the "wheat."

The would-be disciples of Jesus heard the question without discerning, of course, its depth, nevertheless, being in the right condition of heart their answer was along proper lines—Rabbi (master), where are you stopping? They seem to have understood that like themselves he was a Galilean, and that like themselves and others he was merely visiting in that vicinity on account of John's mission work, which drew great multitudes. Their question implied in a pleasant way a desire to become more intimately acquainted with Jesus. And he accepted it in this manner, and invited them to his stopping place; as it was about four o'clock in the afternoon they remained with him the remainder of the day, and we may well imagine what the Evangelist has not recorded respecting the pleasure and profit which came to them during these hours of intercourse. As a result they were convinced of Jesus' Messiahship—their own intercourse with him tending to corroborate John's testimony. And thus it is with all who of a true heart seek to know of God's appointed way; not only are they kindly received by the Lord, but the very opportunities for knowledge, fellowship and communion which they desire are granted to them.

Andrew was one of these two disciples of John, and altho the other is not definitely mentioned it is the general supposition that it was the Apostle John himself, who seems to have been of a very modest disposition, quite unwilling to make his own name very prominent in his writings. Thus on other occasions he mentions himself not by name, but as "that disciple whom Jesus loved."—John 13:23; 19:26.

Andrew and John both had brothers, and the implication of the Greek text seems to be that both at once sought their brothers, to bring them to the Lord, but that "Andrew first findeth his own brother Simon," and it may be surmised that John through modesty neglected here to mention that he also found his brother James, and brought him to the Lord. This is a good illustration of the proper course for those who have found the Lord—they should at once begin to think of their brethren, friends, neighbors, and should carry the good tidings to them as quickly as possible. It was quite proper that these

disciples did not follow the course that some are inclined to follow today, viz., to seek to learn of the Master all that he would communicate, and then go forth and pose as wise ones amongst their friends, giving them the information they had received in dribbets, and avoiding the mention of Jesus as the Father's channel of communication of the truth to them. Properly, they investigated privately to an extent sufficient to justify their confidence, and then immediately began to tell the good tidings to their friends. So each one who has found the Lord should seek to make him known to others; and more than this, like Andrew, we should not only seek to acquaint our friends with the fact, but should seek to bring them to the Lord for personal contact with him—such spiritual contact that they may see him with the eye of faith, and hear him with the ear of faith, that they may know him, whom to know is life eternal. Too many take a different course, and are satisfied merely to tell the good news to their friends without bringing them through faith and consecration into contact with the Lord. Let us more and more learn the right way to serve our friends. Let us learn that knowledge is valueless except as it succeeds in bringing the hearer into faith contact with the Saviour.

When Peter was brought to the Lord, "Jesus looked upon him," or as we might express it, "read him through and through," and then said, Your present name is Simon, and you are the son of John, but you shall be called Cephas—Hebrew for Peter (Greek, *petros*, a stone). This may be understood as a kind of prophecy on our Lord's part respecting a great change in Peter's character. Peter was naturally very impulsive—not sufficiently solid, too easily carried about; and yet our Lord evidently saw in him sterling qualities of heart, honesty, sincerity of purpose; and knowing the influence which his teachings and the holy Spirit would exercise upon such a character, he foretold a change which would make of Peter one of the staunchest and most substantial of his corps of disciples. This prophecy of change was implied in the new name given him, signifying solidity—a stone—whereas his previous name, Simon, signified a listener.

Although Peter was the only one of the twelve whose name was thus changed, we may readily suppose that the characters of all were considerably changed, under the influence of the great Teacher and of the holy Spirit, which came upon them at Pentecost. And so it is with all who become the Lord's disciples: to enter the school of Christ and to remain there means, as the Apostle expresses it, that we will be "transformed by the renewing of our minds." And the Lord promises all such that they shall have "a new name," expressive of the new character, but which no man can appreciate except those who receive it—the name of Christ—Rev. 2:17.

In the case of Philip, the order of procedure was reversed, and instead of his coming to the Lord, as did the first two, and instead of his being brought to the Lord, as in the case of Peter and probably James, the Lord, on the contrary, "found him" or approached him on the subject, inviting him to become one of his disciples. This shows us the diversity of divine operation in respect to those who are ready for the truth. It may reach them in one way or in another, but all who are ready for it we may be sure will be brought in contact with Messiah—drawn of the Father. We are not to question that Philip had been previously under divine preparation and drawn into a condition of heart ready to receive Jesus, else he would not have become his follower when invited.

Philip was doubtless acquainted with Andrew and Peter, since they were of the same city, and like Andrew he seems to have thought at once of telling the good tidings to another, and he remembered his friend Nathaniel, whom he knew to be God-fearing, and living in expectation of the fulfilment of the divine promise of the Messiah. We note with pleasure the directness of his presentation of the subject, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law [in the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament] and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth." He did not attempt to interest Nathaniel merely with the prospect of joint-heirship in the kingdom, though that of course would be implied indirectly; but he drew attention to our Lord's person. And his language shows that he was not a mere enthusiast, but that he had been making a study of the fact that Messiah had been described by Moses and the prophets, and that he had evidently been endeavoring, to the best of his ability, to test our Lord's title by those predictions and had found satisfactory evidence that Jesus was indeed the Christ, the Sent of God. So it should be with all of us when we attempt to present the message of Christ to the attention of others. We should have the promises of God and their fulfilment in mind; and these should be our argument. It is not calling attention to Christ, nor at all following the example of Philip, to assail men with threats of eternal tor-

ment, and to urge them to join some human society called a church; nor is it following Philip's example to present as inducements the prospect of financial and social prosperity through church affiliations. On the contrary, the message to be delivered is respecting our Lord, and that he is the Deliverer whom the Father has sent, and that whoever would have the Father's fellowship and blessing must come to Messiah and in him find the wisdom of God and the mercy of God unto salvation.

Nathaniel is commonly understood to be another name for Bartholomew, and he probably, like the others, had been in attendance at John's mission. We may readily suppose that John's work not only attracted to him the social outcasts of Israel, seeking a life of reformation, but that it drew to him also certain collaborators in the work, who were known as his "disciples," and who assisted him in administering baptism to those who came as repentant sinners. (John 4:1, 2) This offers another suggestion respecting these Israelites indeed, who were of John's company, and were thus introduced earliest to Jesus, and were ready to become his disciples: their fidelity to righteousness, and their endeavor to serve the Lord according to the best of their ability, led directly to their more intimate association with Jesus and his service. So doubtless we will find it today, that some who are engaged in works of reform from proper motives are specially prepared for deeper truths, and grander privileges in connection with the present harvest work, and we should be willing to put ourselves in the way of such, after the example of our Lord with these his first disciples.

Nathaniel seems to have been rather of the incredulous type of mind; he was fearful that his friend Philip was being deceived by an impostor, and he began to offer objections. Nazareth itself was noted as being rather a fanatical city; besides, no doubt Nathaniel had in mind the declaration of the prophet respecting Bethlehem as the city that would be honored as Messiah's birthplace, and so he inquired, Is it reasonable for us to expect that any great good would come from Nazareth? Is there any Scripture to that effect? He was of course ignorant of the fact that our Lord was born in Bethlehem, and taken as an infant to the home of Joseph in Nazareth. His question, and the reasoning which it implies, were evidently very proper. But as we note Philip's reply, we are full of admiration for its simplicity and wisdom. He did not attempt to explain matters which are difficult to be understood, and which had not yet been explained to him; nor did he waver in his faith because of this suggestion of doubt. On the contrary he said, "Come and see" when you have seen the man, and have heard him as I have, no doubt will remain in your mind that he is no ordinary man, and that he is all he claims to be.

It would be well if all of the Lord's dear followers would learn well a proper, simple directness of approach on religious subjects, exemplified by Philip's words to Nathaniel; and also they should learn not to attempt to take the Master's place, but to bring all true Israelites direct to him, as the Teacher, the explainer of the obscure features connected with himself and his work. Matters often look differently on the outside from what they appear on the inside, as faith and greater privilege display them. God has purposely arranged it so that those who look from the outside only see many inconsistencies, unharmonies and undesirable features, while those who get to view matters from the inside standpoint of faith can see riches of grace, beauty, harmony, divine workmanship. And this exterior view is the one that naturally comes to all of us first, as it came to Nathaniel, and the proper course to be pursued is that suggested by Philip—come on the inside and see how it looks; take the standpoint of faith in the divine revelation, and from that standpoint note the grandeur of the divine plan.

This same lesson is pointedly illustrated by an anecdote told by Pastor Spurgeon, deceased, of a man who was invited into an orchard to eat some of the fruit; he refused, for he said that he had picked up some of the apples by the roadside that fell from the trees, and they were poor and bitter. The owner replied those trees were placed there on purpose, so that bad boys would not be attracted into the orchard to steal. "But," said he, "come inside, and there the apples are delicious." Thus it is with those who see Christianity only from the exterior. They see many misrepresentations of true religion and true faith in prominent places, and even if they be able to distinguish as between the true Christianity and its misrepresentation in churchianity, they are apt to see only the self-denials, the crosses, the persecution for righteousness' sake, etc., and know nothing comparatively of the heavenly peace and blessing enjoyed by those who have entered into newness of life with Christ, who are supported well by the gracious promises of the divine Word and by the fellowship of spirit granted to them, which permits them to rejoice even in tribulation and count their disadvantages as but light afflictions enduring but for a moment, when compared with their higher joys, and their hopes that these shall be eternal.

Let us leave this lesson with two thoughts specially clear before our minds: (1) The importance of finding the Lord, and not merely of gaining information about him. (2) The propriety and importance of seeking out the "brethren," and of bringing them not merely to a knowledge of abstract truth, but especially to the Lord, and to intimate communion and fellowship with him.

THE KINGDOM ATTAINABLE ONLY BY A NEW BIRTH

FEB. 11.—JOHN 3:1-18.

Nicodemus was evidently a good man, and "not far from the kingdom"—not far from the attitude of heart necessary to the attainment of the kingdom. He was a man of learning and influence, a prominent member of the chief seat of the Jews, and one of the judges of their chief or Supreme Court, the Sanhedrim. His wealth, learning, etc., gave him advantages over many of the poor and unlearned, and yet they also brought disadvantages, as our Lord on another occasion expressed it: "How hardly [with what difficulty] shall they that have riches [of any kind] enter into the kingdom of God." It would naturally be more difficult for a man of large influence and social standing to receive instructions from Jesus, and to become his follower, than for humble fishermen to do so; pride, social caste, thought of what people would think and say, etc., would all tend to hinder him. For these reasons, as well as possibly with a hope to have a more quiet conversation, Nicodemus visited Jesus by night—semi-secretly.

Evidently he had been impressed by the teachings and the miracles of our Lord, for we find him ready to acknowledge Jesus as a great Teacher sent of God, although not ready to confess him the Messiah. Our Lord's ministry, while commending him to Nicodemus, was evidently a very different one from what he had expected of Messiah. As a Jew he of course had the usual Jewish thought respecting the kingdom of God, *viz.*, that Israel was that kingdom, merely shorn of its power by the Gentiles until Messiah should appear for its deliverance and to subjugate all nations before Israel, that the Jewish law might become the law of the world, going forth with power from Jerusalem. Nicodemus discerned the wide difference between such hopes and the kind of a kingdom proclaimed by Jesus and his disciples. We may reasonably infer, therefore, that his queries, though not stated, were along this line and

our Lord's replies, quoted with greater detail, so intimate

It was with astonishment that Nicodemus heard from the great Teacher that himself and others of the Jewish nation could not possibly enter the kingdom without being born anew; and naturally his mind ran to the natural birth and he inquired how it was possible that a full-grown man could be born over again. Such a question was desired by our Lord, and gave opportunity for the explanation that the first birth which all experience, *viz.*, the birth of the flesh, by which mankind is born to human nature, and with a *flesh body*, is a type, a figure, an illustration of a higher spiritual birth, to a spiritual nature with a *spirit body*. "That which is born of the flesh is *flesh*: that which is born of the spirit, is *spirit*." As a man cannot see trees, houses, flowers, etc., nor enter into the enjoyment of these, until after he has been born of the flesh, so likewise no one can either see or enter into the heavenly kingdom, except he be born of the spirit. In other words, a human being can see earthly things, but only a heavenly or spirit-born one can see and share in the heavenly things; and the long promised kingdom of God, the Millennial age, for which Israel was waiting, is to be a spiritual kingdom and not an earthly one, composed of spirit beings and not flesh beings; and only those born of water and of the spirit would ever see or enter into that kingdom.

The reference to water was probably suggested by some question from Nicodemus, respecting John and his baptism unto repentance—whether or not this had anything to do with the new birth. Our Lord's answer associates John's baptism of water unto repentance with the spirit begetting which began at Pentecost. Repentance from sin was essential to the right condition of heart which would prepare a Jew for transfer from the earthly typical kingdom, and make him ready for the

begetting of the holy Spirit through which, if obedient, he would finally be born into the heavenly kingdom in "the first resurrection." This use of the word "born" as representing resurrection is a Scriptural one, for do we not read that our Lord Jesus in his resurrection was "the first-born from the dead"—"the first-born amongst many brethren"—and was it not in respect to these "brethren" who would with him be *sharers in the kingdom* that he addressed Nicodemus?—Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15, 18.

While we hold that this Scripture in its full, ultimate meaning, relates to the first resurrection of the kingdom class into kingdom power, glory, honor and immortality, we nevertheless concede that the word *gēnāo* is sometimes rendered *begotten*. We concede also that every one who is to be *born* of the spirit in the first resurrection must first be *begotten* of the spirit in the present life. We concede also that the new life now begun is frequently spoken of as though the new creature were *already born* by a figurative resurrection to newness of life. "You hath he quickened [made alive, by a figurative resurrection] who were dead in trespasses and sins." But these partial and figurative uses of the words "alive" and "resurrection" and "born" should not be permitted to discount our thought respecting the realities and powers and glories which can be attained only by a share in the actual first resurrection—"born from the dead."

While Jesus was talking with Nicodemus quite probably the wind whistled through the apartment in which they were sitting, rattling the doors, etc., and Jesus seized upon this as a good illustration by which to convey to the mind of Nicodemus the difference between human beings and spirit beings, and to give him a clearer conception of the nature and powers of the class who would compose the spiritual kingdom when set up in power and great glory. He said, The wind blows where it pleases; you hear its sound, but cannot know whence it comes nor whither it goes; and so it will be with those born of the spirit—all inheritors of the heavenly kingdom: they will be as invisible and can go and come as the wind, and men in the flesh will be unable to see them, as they are unable to see the wind, though they will be everywhere present and influential, as is the wind.

Nicodemus was astounded at the thought that the kingdom of God would be so different from what himself and others had expected. All this should not have been so strange to Nicodemus: he should have remembered that the powers which our Lord described as those which would belong to the spirit-born class were the very powers which in the past from time to time had been manifested through holy angels, who being sent on special missions appeared suddenly, and when their mission was accomplished, vanished just as suddenly, coming and going like the wind—none knew whence or whither. Nicodemus as a teacher of the Law, should have had these things in mind, and our Lord rather reproves him for not grasping the subject quickly: Are you, a teacher in Israel, ignorant of these things? Is it difficult for you, who are acquainted with the Law, to realize these teachings? I have been telling you only such things as are known and to a considerable extent have been demonstrated amongst men through the ministry of angels, yet you are unwilling to receive the testimony. How could you expect to believe, if I should proceed to explain to you heavenly and spiritual things pertaining to that kingdom? You surely would be unprepared for such information. Nor would Nicodemus have been to blame for not understanding spiritual things if our Lord had told of them; for only the spirit-begotten can clearly grasp and appreciate those things. Our Lord was explaining to him that he must not expect a comprehension of such things at that time, but should merely expect a partial understanding, sufficient, however, as a basis of faith; clearer comprehension would come with the spirit baptism at Pentecost. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. . . . God hath revealed them unto us [spirit-begotten ones] by his Spirit" (1 Cor. 2:14, 10), and we may enter into the realities when born from the dead in his likeness.

Continuing, our Lord reminded Nicodemus that no man had ever ascended into heaven [none had ever been there, or seen heavenly things] except he himself, who had come down from the heavenly condition to the earthly condition—even the Son of Man.* Although aside from the main line of this lesson, it is not amiss that we here note the harmony of our Lord's words with the words of the Apostle Peter in his discourse on the day of Pentecost, "David is not ascended into the heavens." (Acts 2:34) All the testimonies of the Scriptures are in harmony on this subject, although opposed by nearly all unin-

* Oldest Greek MSS. omit the words, "which is in heaven"

spired writers, heathen as well as Christian, who follow the traditions of men instead of giving heed to the sure Word of God.

Having thus answered Nicodemus' questions to the very limit of possibility at the time, our Lord turned the subject, and by way of showing the grand basis for this spiritual kingdom, and that he himself could not enter into that kingdom while still in the flesh (1 Cor. 15:50), but that he must also be "changed" to spirit conditions by resurrection, he points out his coming ignominious death, and how it was illustrated and typified by Moses and the brazen serpent in the wilderness. The whole world is dying, and it was needful that our Lord Jesus should be lifted up as a sin-offering on behalf of the world, that he might subsequently be lifted up in glory, and in order that having thus paid the penalty for all, eternal life might be offered to all—"that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

In passing the point, let us notice that our Lord said not a word respecting any danger of the world going into eternal torment, nor did he utter a word respecting the salvation of any in ignorance. His declaration was that the world was *perishing*, and that the only way in which they could obtain eternal life at all would be through believing in him. So then to all who are willing to take the simple statement of God's Word, it is clear enough that the wicked who reject the Lord cannot have eternal life, and hence could not spend an eternity in misery, because without life there can be no feeling—without life they are *perished*. It is clear enough also that who ever shall be saved in this age or in the age to come must be saved by *believing* in Jesus, and cannot be saved through ignorance, according to this Gospel, which is the only authorized one.

Then our Lord gave Nicodemus a brief statement of why the Heavenly Father has provided the blessing which he had been describing—the kingdom, and the lifting up or sacrifice of the Son of Man as a prerequisite. The reason is God's sympathetic love for humanity. He beheld that although mankind were sharers in father Adam's sentence of death, yet many amongst them would, if granted an opportunity, gladly accept the divine arrangement, and come back into at-one-ment with their God, and rejoice to abide in his favor and to do his will. On this account God had sympathy for mankind, and prepared a great plan of salvation, of which the first coming of Jesus in the flesh as a *sacrifice for sins* was the first step or manifestation. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son [to humiliation and sacrifice in death], that whosoever believeth in him should not *perish*, but have [obtain] everlasting life." It has been said by some one that this 16th verse is the golden verse of the Bible, containing more than any other one a condensed statement of the Gospel. Luther called this verse "the little Gospel," or "the little Bible."

Perhaps in answer to another question, or perhaps merely as a part of the further discourse to Nicodemus, our Lord next explained to him that God's object in sending his Son into the world was not to have the world condemned, for the world was already condemned, sharing with Adam the original condemnation or sentence of death. On the contrary, God sent his Son to save the world—to *recover mankind from that sentence or condemnation*. This is in harmony with another statement of Scripture which declares of believers that "There is now . . . *no condemnation* to them that are in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 8:1), yet only believers have thus escaped, all the remainder of the world are still under wrath, "children of wrath," and there is no other way of escape except through Christ, for "There is no other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved."

The 18th verse is in harmony with this thought, that believers escape the condemnation that is on the world, but that those who do not accept of Christ *remain under the condemnation* already upon them at birth, as Adam's heirs. Nevertheless, as is declared in the 19th verse, the condemnation already upon men is justified by their course, if after seeing the light they do not love it, but reject it, and fight against it. However, we are to remember in this connection the Apostle's declaration that many in the present time see only in part, the god of this world blinding them more or less completely. (2 Cor. 4:4) And we rejoice in the assurance of the same Apostle (John 1:9) that Jesus is the true Light, which ultimately, in the kingdom, shall be a great Sun of Righteousness, with healing in his beams, which shall shed forth light and knowledge to every member of the human family during his Millennial reign; so that all shall have the fullest opportunity of ceasing to be "children of wrath," and of escaping the condemnation that is on them through Adam's disobedience, and of coming back through the Mediator, during the times of

restitution, to all the good things lost through sin.—Acts 3:19-21.

While our Lord in his discourse to Nicodemus dealt only with the new birth of "the church which is his body," and which with him, born of the spirit, shall constitute the heavenly kingdom that shall bless the world, he nevertheless elsewhere intimates that the restitution blessings which shall come

to mankind will be also after the nature of a new birth, though not a birth to spiritual conditions. Speaking to his disciples of the Millennial kingdom, when they should sit with him in his throne—the times of restitution—he calls that Millennial age and work *regeneration*—Greek, *palinogenesis*. (Matt. 19:28) This is not the same word rendered "born again," but signifies more nearly restitution, restoration or renovation.

NOTHING TO DRAW WITH AND THE WELL IS DEEP

FEB. 18.—JOHN 4:5-26.

"God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

Samaria was the name of a stretch of country lying between Judea and Galilee; we might call it a county and say that its chief city, of the same name, was its county seat. Its inhabitants were known as Samaritans, and the Jews, while dealing with them commercially, would have no intercourse with them socially and religiously, but treated them in every respect as they treated Gentiles in general, as being outside of divine favor, "aliens and strangers to the commonwealth of Israel, without God, and having no hope in the world." (Eph 2:12) The ancestors of these Samaritans were Gentiles, and were transported to Samaria centuries before, as the Israelites were transported to Babylon, by Nebuchadnezzar. (2 Kings 17:24-41) These Gentiles, through contact with the Jews, and through intermarriage with certain renegade Jews, obtained a smattering of knowledge of the Jewish hopes and worship, combining these to some extent with false ideas of their own. As a people they are described by the Apostle's words as feeling after God, if haply they might find him. (Acts 17:27) But the time had not yet come for God to reveal himself to the world, or in any sense of the word to accept Gentiles, thus far all divine favor had been concentrated upon Israel, the seed of Abraham and upon only such of those as maintained their covenant relationship by circumcision; hence the Jews were *right* in not acknowledging the Samaritans, and in having no dealings with them religiously, nor intermarrying with them socially. This was not a matter of bigotry, but of divine regulation and prohibition.—Deut. 7:1-6.

It will be remembered that our Lord distinctly set the seal of his approval to this course, when sending forth his disciples to declare the kingdom of God at hand. He said to them, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; for I am not sent save to the lost sheep of the 'house of Israel.'" We remember, too, the city of the Samaritans concerning which the Apostles James and John said, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire from heaven, to consume them?" To whom Jesus answered, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of. The Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Nevertheless, we remember that Jesus would not perform his miracles in healing the Samaritan sick, and that it was for this reason that the Samaritans resented and would not receive him, or permit him to pass through their city on his journey.—Luke 9:51-56

It was during one of these numerous journeys from Judah through Samaria, en route to Galilee, that our Lord, wearied from the exhaustion of preaching and from the further exhaustion of his vitality in healing the sick, and from journeying, rested at Jacob's well, while his disciples turned aside to a village to purchase provisions.

Jacob's well had a great reputation throughout that region, because of the purity of its waters; that being a limestone country most of the water found was brackish, but Jacob's well, sunk to a depth of over a hundred feet, and about eight feet in diameter, struck a crevice in the rock, which yielded a large supply of desirable water. We are to remember, too, the scarcity of water in that part of the country, especially at some seasons of the year, which accounts for the fact that the Samaritan woman of our lesson had quite a distance to come to obtain her supply at this good and never failing well-spring. When she arrived, Jesus, who was sitting on the curb of the well, resting, was at once recognized by her as a Jew, and she was at once recognized by him as a Samaritan, not merely by facial lineaments, but also by distinctive features of dress—the Jews having a white fringe on their garments, while the Samaritans used blue.

For a Jew to make a request, to ask a courtesy, of a Samaritan, was unusual, and consequently when Jesus asked for a drink of the water the woman was drawing she was astonished enough to inquire how it came that he, a Jew, would make such a request of her a Samaritan, and her question has in it the element of boldness, which is explained later on by her acknowledgment that she was not a virtuous woman. All this, however, makes it the more remarkable that our Lord would condescend to have any intercourse with her. There

is a lesson in this, however, along the line of the Apostle's words, "Condescend to men of low estate." We cannot avoid supposing that the reason why many Christian people would utterly disdain to speak to such a woman is that they have almost unconsciously to themselves imbibed the spirit of their religious teachings, which would declare that God would so abominate such a person that he would deliver her over to the devil, to be eternally tormented, as soon as she came into his hands at death. They reason, almost unconsciously, that one so despised of the Lord should be shunned and spurned by humanity. They need a clearer knowledge of the divine Word respecting God's attitude toward sinners, his unwillingness that any should perish, and his provision that the wilfully wicked, who reject all his mercies, shall not be tormented, but be blotted out of existence. (2 Pet. 3:9; Acts 3:23) True views of the divine character and plan are very helpful to God's people in shaping their course properly.

Had there been a company of Jews to whom the Lord could have talked at this time, we are bound to suppose that his energies would have been expended on their behalf, to the neglect of the disputable Samaritan; but there being none of the "children" to be "fed" at the time, he let some of the crumbs of knowledge and blessing fall to the Samaritans, who, like the Gentiles, were not "children," but in comparison were "dogs." (See Matt. 15:27) Our Lord's course here is an instruction for his followers, an illustration of the Apostle's words that we should "do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith." Further, it illustrates our Lord's own declaration, that it was his meat and drink to do the Father's will, to be engaged in the Father's business. Although he was weary, and knew that further talking would interfere with his rest and refreshment, he was ready to sacrifice his own convenience that he might be helpful to another, even to a social outcast. So the Apostle exhorts all of the Lord's people to be "instant in season and out of season," in preaching to willing ears.

There was wisdom in our Lord's method of introducing himself to the woman. He made a request that would not be difficult for her to comply with, and at the same time he laid himself under obligation to her; and experience shows that this is one of the best methods of approaching all—condescension and an expression of confidence in their generosity, with the implication which it gives of willingness to return the favor in some manner.

Not heeding the rudeness of the woman's reply to his request, our Lord proceeded to teach a lesson respecting the grace of God, using the good water of Jacob's deep well as an illustration, telling the woman that if she understood the privilege she enjoyed she in turn would be asking him for "living water"—flowing water, not stagnant, always fresh. She perceived that there was some deep meaning to our Lord's words. He could not refer to Jacob's well, for he had no leather bucket and cord with which to draw from it; hence her inquiry, Whence hast thou living water? Father Jacob provided this well, and knew of no better water for himself and family. Are you able to provide better water than this? Are you greater than he? Our Lord then led another step in the exposition of spiritual things, assuring her that the water which he had to give was of a different kind; that it would not only satisfy thirst for the time being, but would be a continual well-spring within, ever giving satisfaction.

Water, living water, pure water, is a wonderful symbol, very expressive to everyone; and thirst is another. Thirst is desire, craving, longing. Physical thirst is said to be much more painful than physical hunger. The latter loses its powers gradually in weakness, but thirst continues and intensifies hourly until the very last breath. Water is that which quenches, which satisfies this demand of nature; and so there is also a soul-thirst and a water of life which alone can satisfy it.

Every ambition and desire is a thirst. A man's greatness, his individuality, is measured (1) by the number of his thirsts or desires; (2) by the character or quality of those thirsts or

desires, (3) by the capacity and intensity of those thirsts or desires. And true education is the instructor of men as respects proper and improper desires, or thirsts: and respecting which should be gratified, and how to do so most wisely. He who has no desires has nothing to satisfy, and is practically a nonentity. The lesson of life is not that we should be without desires and plenty of them, but that these desires should be transformed from sinful desires to righteous desires, from sinful cravings to holy cravings. Thus the followers of the Lord are to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and are to be filled—satisfied—not by losing their desires, but by realizing them—by appropriating the Lord's provision, which is abundant and continuous, satisfying all proper longings. Improper longings are to be resisted, controlled, rooted out, while proper longings are to be built up, cultivated, to be supplied and to be enjoyed forever.

This satisfying water of life can be obtained from no other source than our Redeemer, and all who have received it well know it and can never be sufficiently thankful for it; for in it they have the peace of God which passeth all understanding ruling in their hearts. Instead of thirst for honor amongst men, they have the thirst for fellowship and honor with the Heavenly Father and the Redeemer. Instead of a thirst for earthly wealth, their transformed desires now thirst for heavenly treasures. Instead of thirst for sensual pleasures, their desires are transformed so that their chiefest joys and desires are for spiritual pleasures. And all these thirsts are abundantly and continually satisfied through the refreshment of the Word of Truth, and the holy Spirit of the truth—the water of life, which is communicated to us by our Redeemer, and is in each one a perennial living fountain.

Of course the Samaritan woman did not grasp the meaning of our Lord's words, nor could we, under the same circumstances, for we are to remember that the well from which our Lord gives us to drink is deep, and that neither the Samaritan woman nor we have anything to draw with. We, however, living under the new dispensation of the holy Spirit, have been abundantly supplied, for, as the Apostle declares, "The spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. . . . That we might know [appreciate, be satisfied with] the things that are freely given unto us of God."—1 Cor. 2:10, 12.

Our Lord did not answer the woman's request for the true water of life, (1) because the time for bestowing the holy Spirit of the truth had not yet come, and did not come until after the great sacrifice at Calvary—until Pentecost. (2) Because she was a Samaritan, and as such could not receive divine favor and the holy Spirit until the appointed time, which was not until the door of favor would be open to all Gentiles—not until three and a half years after Pentecost: nevertheless the woman's interest and faith and the faith of her townsmen seem to indicate an honesty of heart pleasing to the Lord, on account of which he let fall to them some "crumbs" of comforting truth which may have prepared them for the Gospel when later it was fully opened to them and to all Gentiles. (3) Because the woman was not yet in the condition of heart to receive the water of life. It was unnecessary to explain to the woman the first two reasons, since the last was a barrier which she could more readily understand, and hence our Lord called her attention to the fact that she was living in sin. She perceived that he was gifted with a prophetic insight which permitted him a stranger to know of her sinful course of life, without asking.

It may be queried why our Lord would thus confer with a woman unprepared to receive the blessings he had to give, and one to whom he could not have given the blessing then, even if she had been prepared. The answer is (1) that he was making use of an opportunity to its fullest possible advantage; (2) that despite her sinful course of life the Lord saw traits of honesty in the woman's character, evidenced from the narrative; (3) he might reasonably hope that the influence of this discourse might tend toward righteousness and toward a true thirst for the water of life, which six years later, under the general preaching of the Gospel (without restriction to the

Jews) might bring some of these Samaritans to a realization of the fact that the well of the water of life is deep, that they had nothing wherewith to draw, and that if they would have this satisfying portion they must receive it as a gift from him who laid down his life that he might have the privilege of supplying the water of life to whosoever wills. And should the poor Samaritan woman never have come under the influence of the Gospel, with an opportunity to drink of the water of life, we have the assurance of the divine Word that such an opportunity will be granted to her in the future, together with all who do not now have an opportunity.

We praise the Lord for the information afforded us in his Word, that although the water of life is now given individually, and enjoyed only by the "elect," "even as many as the Lord our God shall call," yet the time is coming that it shall no longer be thus a well of water *springing up within* the Lord's people, but during the Millennial age will be a river of water of life, broad and full and clear as crystal, flowing out from the throne of God and of the Lamb, and of the bride the Lamb's wife and joint-heir, to all the families of the earth: and that then there will not only be trees of life, whose leaves will be for the healing, restitution, of the nations but that the Spirit and the bride (then glorified) shall say, Come and he that heareth may say, Come, and whosoever will may come and have the water of life freely.—Rev. 22:17.

The Samaritan woman seemed anxious to avoid any discussion of her own character and life, and skillfully turned the question to a theological one—whether the Jews or the Samaritans were right in their different views respecting divine worship and its proper place. And in this we see that human nature is much the same today. Men and women of today would rather discuss theological problems and denominational controversies, than turn their glance inward, and note the inconsistencies of their own lives, with a desire to reform them. Nor did our Lord too closely press the moral question he had so promptly touched and to some extent made sensitive, and his course in this should be a lesson to his followers. It is sufficient that attention be called to a wrong, and often this is more efficacious than if they be teased and angered, and put on the defensive, by disrespectful "nagging."

Our Lord summed up in few words a great lesson respecting the proper worship of God. He told the woman most pointedly that the Samaritans had neither part nor lot in the matter, and worshiped they knew not what, while the Jews, on the contrary, were following the divine instruction. Nevertheless, he pointed to the fact that a great dispensational change was imminent, in which all distinctions and barriers of place and manner would pass away, and that under the new dispensation of this Gospel age any and all having ears to hear and eyes to see God's grace would be permitted to worship God anywhere, but only in spirit (with the heart, sincerely), and in truth, in harmony with the divine arrangement, in the true way—through Christ, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and by whom alone there is access to the Father—the Messiah, the procurer and dispenser of the water of life.

An Oriental fable tells of a fountain whose waters were infused with a peculiar power, so that wherever a drop of this water fell on a barren plain it caused a new fountain to gush forth, so that provided with this water the traveler might pass through any desert, however wide or dry, and be always refreshed.

"Wild and fanciful the legend: yet may not meanings high,
Visions of better things to come, within its shadow lie?
Type of a better fountain, to mortals now unsealed,
The full, free salvation of Christ our Lord revealed!"

"Beneath the cross those waters lie, and he who finds them there,
All through the wilderness of life the living stream may bear;
And blessings follow in his steps, until where'er he goes
The moral wastes begin to bud, and blossom as the rose!"

THE MEMORIAL SUPPER

The anniversary of our Lord's death reckoned according to Jewish calendar will this year be April 13 at 3 P. M.—consequently the celebration of the Memorial Supper will be on the

previous evening, April 12, after six o'clock P. M. We make this early announcement for the sake of friends afar off. Further statements and local announcements later.

Gethsemane can I forget?
Or there thy conflict see.
Thine agony and bloody sweat,
And not remember thee?

When to the cross I turn mine eyes,
And rest on Calvary,
O Lamb of God, my Sacrifice,
I must remember thee.

INTERESTING LETTERS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—A few days since dear Brother Norcott was in to call on me, and in the course of our conversation he mentioned you, and that he had often had a desire to meet you in the flesh, but that it was quite improbable now. He is getting very feeble, and it is a great effort for him to get about much, but he is anxious to do all he possibly can. Some time ago he felt a little better and took his horse and cart and went out and sold nine DAWNS. He returned beaming with joy that the Lord had so blessed his work. It is hard for him to write, and he wished me, some time when I would be writing to you, to tell you of his great love for you as a brother in Christ, and his gratefulness to you for all the interest you had taken in him while he was in the colporteur work. He said that doubtless you know of his love and prayers already, but that sometimes it was strengthening to us if some of the brethren came to us with a message of love, and he was sure you would appreciate the motive with which it was sent. Also that he was remembering you before the throne of favor, that our dear Master would grant you the needed grace to finish the work before you. So I write this to you.

And, my dear brother, I can also add that that is my own prayer on your behalf. I sometimes think we are too apt to hide our love and not express it as we should, and thus others may come to feel that we do not love them. May the dear Lord bless you abundantly, more than you are able to think. We wish to thank you for the strong nourishing food you have been spreading before us in the TOWERS lately.

Your brother, by the favor of the Lord,

W. E. VANAMBURGH.—*South Dakota.*

[We cannot express in words our deep appreciation of the love of the brethren so often expressed in their letters as above. We assure these dear brethren and all that their love is most heartily reciprocated. We love the brethren and take pleasure in laying down our life in their service. We are glad to know that you remember us and the Lord's "harvest" work, which he has been pleased to center here in Allegheny, in your prayers. If we may judge from the letters received, thousands of prayers ascend daily on our behalf. We cannot tell you how deeply we appreciate this: it keeps us humble as we remember our needs, and it strengthens us as we remember the Lord's sufficiency and his willingness to pour out his blessings in answer to your prayers and ours. These prayers and the divine power to which they are attached are to our hearts a bulwark against the many Satan-blinded foes who beset you and us continually because of our loyalty to the Lord and his Word.

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:

They shall prosper that love thee."—Psa. 122:6.

These words are as true of the Jerusalem the higher and her children of peace as of the earthly Jerusalem. Those who are praying the Lord's blessing upon his cause are seeking to serve it and are proportionately blessed. Those who are indifferent to the welfare of Zion and the Lord's cause now, are standing in a slippery place and are in great danger of falling.

Continue, dear brethren and sisters, to pray for us (1 Thes. 5:25; Heb. 13:18), and be assured that, as the Apostle Paul said, we have a care for all the churches and for the scattered sheep, and continually bear you upon our heart before the throne of the heavenly grace, and watch as well as pray for your interests and welfare.—See Heb. 13:17; 2 Cor. 11:28; 2 Thes. 1:11; Phil. 1:9.

—E. W. COR.

DEAR BROTHER —Spiritual feasts, comforting, encouraging, instructive and edifying, did all the meetings, conducted by our dear Pilgrim Brother, Frank Draper, prove to be, and our only regret is that his stay with us was of necessity so limited, although even longer than we had hoped for. The public meetings of which we had two, in a non-sectarian chapel were well attended considering the inclemency of the weather, fully averaging present church. As an immediate result of one of these it is with pleasure that we announce at least one party was apparently thoroughly aroused and keenly interested, who came to the opposed present truth.

We do not so gratefully thank you and those contributing to the support of these Pilgrim brethren, for the blessed season we have received, and can heartily commend to any of the household of Faith Brother Draper as an able and loving expounder of the Word of God, doing indeed a noble work for the cause of Truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Redeemer, Exemplar and Lord, in thus visiting and exhorting to deeper consecration the little scattered groups.

If any of the benevolent nature of the recent conventions, it has been mentioned that perhaps much good would result from a summer gathering at this place during the State Fair and Exposition next fall and we were glad to learn through Brother D. that hopes of such a meeting were also entertained and mentioned by interested ones he had thus far met in Texas, Arkansas and Indian and Oklahoma Territories, and we there-

fore take the liberty of mentioning the matter to you for advisement. If so, a cordial, brotherly welcome awaits you and other friends, who would be entertained to the extent of our ability.

The Musical Towers ordered were promptly received and used to advantage at meetings.

Our prayers are with you and we crave yours, to the effect that we may be faithful overcomers, even unto death. Yours in Christ,

E. W. BRENNEISEN.—*Texas.*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I feel inclined to give you a brief account of our Volunteer work, even though you may hear from others concerning the same.

We put out about 450 of the booklets last Sunday evening. I felt compelled to go out with the others, as I had been thinking of the letters in last TOWER and of the blessed privilege thus offered us of sharing in the blessing that surely comes to those who do thus serve Him. I would urge all in every place to take up this good work of serving God's household of faith (of whom there may be many yet in Babylon) with this "meat in due season."

By a singular coincident I went first to the M. E. church, where I was converted 25 years ago. The second booklet I gave out was to a young man who offered to pay for it. Upon being assured that it was freely given to all Bible students, he still urged that I accept a dime and send it to the Tract Society, which I will do quite soon.

A little boy came running down, asking me if I would give him another one of those "little Bibles" for an old lady who wanted it.

How true that "Obedience is better than sacrifice," as it is first, or preëminent, and surely involves the true and acceptable sacrifice. How many we see, especially among the sisters of the Roman Catholic system, and also foreign missionaries who are making great sacrifices, yet not according to a knowledge of his plan, and consequently misdirected.

Jesus said, "My sheep hear (obey) my voice" "We ought to obey God rather than men." I firmly believe that all are doing this, who engage in the harvest work, which is evidently under the guidance of the Chief Reaper.

The church here has been greatly benefited by the publication of the Washington and Boston letters in last TOWER. This is clearly discernable in the increased zeal of all for the work. May we not reasonably hope that the increase of zeal here and in other places may be prophetic of a larger work during the coming year?

May our heavenly Father bless the work to the glory of his name, and preserve us all with you unto the establishment of his kingdom! Yours in the hope of the high calling.

MRS. C. A. OWEN.—*Indiana.*

[Two letters have been received from sisters in Christ who are mothers, who are surprised at our advice to Hugo Kuehn in the January 1st WATCH TOWER. One is surprised that we would approve of anything that would bring the boy into touch with sectarianism; the other wonders whether or not all boys' clubs under church auspices are of the kind known to her, and if so she wonders very much that we could advise boys who are seeking to walk in the foot-steps of Jesus to have anything to do with them. She says that in addition to the gymnasium for physical culture, they have cigars, cigarettes, billiards, boxing gloves, etc., all calculated to lead a boy far from the narrow way of true discipleship.

We certainly did not suppose that the basements of churches were used in such a manner, nor can we yet think that this is the usual custom; it would seem too extreme to be general. We hope that those known to this sister are rare exceptions. We assuredly would advise all boys who seek to walk in the footsteps of our Lord to shun all such places, and rather to do without the gymnastic exercises, if they could only be obtained under such conditions.

Our thought, in answering Hugo's question, was that the boys' clubs were merely lecture and recreation guilds, entirely harmless and at the same time profitable, and that the only question was whether or not its association with a nominal church system should properly separate from it those who sought to please the Lord. Our answer was along these lines, and we still think that a wide distinction should be observed as between joining a church, being bound with a misrepresenting creed, etc., and joining a boys' club without creed or other bondage except as respects good morals, and not for religious purposes, but merely for coöperation in obtaining the privileges of the lecture course and the use of the gymnasium at a moderate expense. To mingle with moral boys in this way is, in our judgment, merely a business transaction, and the same rules which would hinder a boy from thus associating with other boys in a moral and creedless club would similarly hinder the Christian father of the boy from dealing in any kind