

children, by choosing fellowship with the world;—by commingling to some extent with the world, the flesh and the devil, even tho, like Lot, disapproving their surroundings which vex their righteous souls. Such, the Apostle tells us, shall be "saved so as by fire." (1 Cor. 3:15) Such the Lord illustrates as coming up out of great tribulation, washing their robes and making them white, and eventually obtaining a blessing, but not the chief one which they might have obtained had they followed faithfully with the pilgrims and strangers, the "little flock."—Rev. 7:9, 14.

The story of Lot's haste out of Sodom, and of his wife's transgression of the angel's command in looking back and hankering after the things left behind, are brought to our attention in that part of our Lord's great prophecy relating to the end of this age;—"Remember Lot's wife!" (Luke 17:32) This reference seems to corroborate the thought that Lot's experiences were somewhat typical. The Lord's people will be tested along the line of their separation from the spirit of the world. Those who, like Abraham, are the friends of God will be far off from the danger; others not so faithful will be in the full midst of the trouble, yet if loyal at heart to the Lord they will be delivered with great loss, and the sufferings which such disappointments and losses will imply; yet in the end such will gain the heavenly, spiritual life for which they started out. None, however, will be delivered if they remain in the city of destruction, Babylon. If they do not avoid it at first, they must at least be willing to leave it, and that with great energy, ere its destruction comes; and if they love the things behind, more than they appreciate deliverance—so that they in any degree look back or long for the evil things doomed to destruction in the coming trouble, it will mean that they will not be worthy of having any part or lot in the deliverance.

The record is that Lot's wife became a pillar of salt, and altho infidelity has been inclined to dispute such a miracle, we have every reason to believe the truthfulness of the record; and like all miracles, if explained, it would no doubt seem reasonable enough. An explanation of the miracle has been suggested by a traveler, as follows: "Just as some of the victims of Pompeii stumbled in their flight, and were buried under the ashes, which still keep the outline of their

figure, so Lot's wife was covered with the *half-liquid*, slimy mud." "An atmosphere heavily charged with the fumes of sulphur and bitumen might easily produce suffocation, as was the case with the elder Pliny in the destruction of Pompeii. And as no dead body would ever decompose on the shores of this salt sea, if left in such an atmosphere, it would become encrusted with salt crystals. Pillars of salt are found in the vicinity which have formed from the spray, mist and saline exhalations of the dead sea, and are constantly growing larger."

#### SUFFERING THE VENGEANCE OF ETERNAL FIRE

Jude tells us that the destruction of Sodom was intended by the Lord to be an illustration of the fate of the wicked. But it certainly does not illustrate what that fate is generally supposed to be: it does not illustrate perpetual fire, with the Sodomites continually burning and never destroyed, and with demons poking the fires and torturing the victims. Nothing of the kind. The "eternal fires" which God intends for the wicked, and which he illustrated in the case of the Sodomites, signify fires, whose work of destruction is complete and everlasting. It is divine vengeance or retribution against sinners—"they shall be punished with an everlasting destruction" (2 Thess. 1:9), beyond all hope of recovery. The "lake of fire" of Revelation, and the Dead Sea of Sodom represent in *symbol* the second death—extinction, from which there is no hope by a resurrection or otherwise. None will go into the second death on account of ignorance. All who enter it will do so because of wilful, deliberate participation in sin, or because of sympathy with it.

Supposing Sodom to represent sin, the lesson would be that all finding themselves in an evil condition of life, even tho, like Lot, their hearts be out of sympathy with it, should and must flee from it if they would avert the consequences. They must flee in haste and tarry not in all the plain. Yet it is a comforting thought that as the angel laid hold of the hands of Lot and his daughters and helped, urged and encouraged them to flee, so the Lord's providences will take hold of every one who shall seek to escape from sin, and will so coöperate with their good wills in the matter that they shall eventually be fully rescued from it.

### A PROPHET, LIKE UNTO MOSES

*"For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul that will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people."*—Acts 3:22, 23.

We agree that the time for the fulfilment of this prediction is near, even at the doors; and now one, styling himself "Rev." John Alexander Dowie, heralds himself to the civilized world as being this Prophet. We are not hastily to accept his datum, and to exclaim, "Verily, this is he of whom Moses in the Law, and the prophets did write." Nor, on the other hand, are we hastily to decide that he is an impostor, a false prophet, simply because he happens to live in our day. Rather, in view of the fact that we are expecting the fulfilment of this Scripture we should look the subject carefully over and weigh all the Scriptural testimony, and thus decide as to the truth or falsity of Mr. Dowie's claims. And, doubtless, in doing this, our investigation of the subject from a Scriptural standpoint will prove profitable to us, whether favorable or unfavorable to Mr. Dowie;—whether they prove him the Prophet foretold, or a deceived and deceiving false prophet.

Analyzing our text, we perceive that its expression, "like unto," has the sense of antitypical; hence the Prophet to be expected must be much greater every way than Moses, as an antitype is always far superior to its type. Moses was the Mediator of the Law Covenant, and thus stood between Israel and God, as we read in reference to the sealing and delivery of the Law Covenant: "The Lord our God made a covenant with you in Horeb . . . The Lord talked with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of fire. *I stood between God and you* [a mediator, or go-between], at that time, to show you the word of the Lord; for ye were afraid by reason of the fire, and went not up into the mount." (Deut. 5:2-5) From this we see that Moses, the *typical* prophet, was very great, very influential, had a very high office; and this would signify that the future Prophet whom God had in mind, and whose coming was foretold thirty-five hundred years ago by Moses himself, and further pointed forward to the Apostle Peter in our text, must, as the antitype of

greater Mediator between God and men, a still mightier Law-giver whose word would be omnipotent, and violation of which would eventually mean destruction;—as it is written "Every soul which will not hear that Prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." (Acts 3:23) Even at first glance every unprejudiced mind would say that Mr. Dowie, and every other man on earth, seems far too insignificant, far too small to fill the requirements. Not only too small for the antitype, but far inferior even to the type.

Turning to the record of Moses' words in the Old Testament, we find them in Deut. 18:15-20, and here we see that the particular feature of Moses' work as a prophet and law-giver to Israel, which is here referred to as typical of a greater work to be accomplished by a greater Law-giver and Prophet, was the work which he performed for Israel as the Mediator of the Law Covenant at Mount Sinai, in the district called Horeb, already referred to. At the time of the giving of the Law, Israel witnessed a wonderful manifestation of divine power. "All the people witnessed the thundering and the lightning, and the noise of the trumpet and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it they removed and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die." (Exod. 20:18, 19) In response to this their request God appointed Moses to be their Mediator or representative. Moses communed with the Lord in the mount, and received from him the Law, and came to the people and communicated the Law to them, and obtained their assent to the covenant; and then, as a representative both of God and of Israel, Moses sealed the covenant;—ratified it by taking the blood of bulls and of goats and sprinkling first the book of the Law, or tables of stone on which the commandments were written, as representing Jehovah, and sprinkling, secondly, the people, as binding them. Thus the covenant between God and Israel was established at the hands of Moses, the Mediator. It was at this time of the recognition of Moses as the Mediator of

that Covenant that the Lord impliedly taught that the time would come when he would make a new and better Covenant, and establish it in the hands of a new and greater Mediator (the Christ); saying, "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and I will put my words into his mouth."—Deut. 18:18.

The Apostle assures us of this;—that the Law-Covenant was a type, an illustration of a greater and more wonderful covenant, between God and his people in the future. He points out to us that as Moses was a type of Christ, the great Prophet, so the animal-blood he used in sealing that typical Law Covenant represented or typified the blood of Christ—the blood which seals, makes binding, ratifies, the New Covenant. Our Lord referred to the same thing in connection with his death, and the institution of the Memorial Supper, when he said, "This is the blood of the New Covenant, shed for many for the remission of sins."—Matt. 26:28.

We are sure that we are right in this application; because the Apostle, in Heb. 9:19,20, refers us back to the sealing of the Law Covenant, saying, "When Moses had spoken every precept to all the people, according to the Law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people, saying, 'This is the blood of the covenant which God hath enjoined unto you.'" The entire tenor of the Apostle's argument shows us that he understood and taught that the antitype of this was to be found in Christ, in his sacrifice for sins, and not in Mr. Dowie, or any work that he might do. Continuing the same argument, into the next chapter (Heb. 10:16), the Apostle shows that the work of our Lord Jesus in offering up himself, as the ransom-price for mankind, was sealing the New Covenant, the antitypical covenant, which God had promised through Moses, and through all the prophets, saying, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord."

The Apostle evidently understood that the covenant which Moses, the prophet, instituted, *typified* the better covenant, which the greater Prophet, Christ, would institute in due time. Proceeding to compare these two prophets, the typical Moses and the antitypical Christ, the Apostle says, "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy: . . . of how much severer punishment suppose ye shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the [New] Covenant, wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace?" (Heb. 10:28,29) The Apostle's argument evidently is that if God puts so much dignity upon the typical prophet, Moses, that violation of his covenant would mean death, we might reasonably expect that a severer punishment would come to all those who shall be brought under the benefits of the New Covenant, and who shall then spurn them, not appreciating the fact that they were secured by the precious blood of Christ, the antitypical Prophet.

Continuing the same line of thought, viz., a comparison of the two mediators, and the two covenants, the Apostle draws to our attention the fact that Israel could not endure the terrible manifestations of divine power and justice at Mount Sinai, although they were only typical: and that as the typical Israelites needed and desired to be dealt with representatively instead of directly, through a mediator and not personally,—to be in the hands of the mediator, and not in the hands of God. So, says the Apostle, in respect to the New Covenant, and in respect to those who have apprehended that it was sealed with the blood of Christ, and that it is in operation now, and that we have the benefits of it conferred upon us—If we should repudiate this New Covenant it would mean that we would thereby repudiate Christ (not Mr. Dowie), as our Mediator, and would fall into the hands of the living God, to be dealt with directly by him, and that without mercy. The Apostle clinches his argument by saying, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God"—Heb. 10:31.

It would be a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, not because God is unjust, but because he is just; and because we are imperfect, and therefore could not hope to meet the requirements of the law of absolute justice. Divine justice would be to us as a consuming fire, destroying us, because we could not comply with its requirements. It is for this reason that God has appointed for us a covenant of mercy, of which Jesus is the great Prophet and Mediator, —not Dowie. God having appointed this one channel of mercy it is for us to accept it as he proffers it, or, rejecting it, to fall into the hands of Justice, and to meet our deserts, utter destruction. Those who reject Christ, the Mediator of the New Covenant, will suffer more than those who rejected the typical mediator, Moses: for the latter lost merely the

present life, but will have share in the restitution blessings of the next age; while all who intelligently and wilfully reject the Mediator of the New Covenant will die the second death. This is in full accord with the statement of our text, "The soul that will not hear [obey] that Prophet shall be destroyed from amongst the people."

Having seen from Moses' own words and their context that this use of the word "prophet" signifies teacher, law-giver, mediator, between the people and God, and that this declaration looked forward to the giving of a greater law at the hands of a greater mediator and prophet and law-giver, now turn to the words of the Apostle, which precede our text. (Acts 3:19-21) We find Peter discussing the second coming of Christ, and under the power of the holy Spirit explaining to the people that with his second advent would come great blessing, "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord," but that the heavens would retain him until those blessed times of restitution should be due. He connects this argument with the words of our text, showing that Moses' prophecy of the great Prophet, of whom he was but a type, would have its fulfilment at the second advent of Jesus, in the power and great glory of his kingdom—"whom the heavens must receive, until the times of restitution. . . . For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto [antitypical of] me." This leaves no room for question, at the bar of any reasonable mind, that the Prophet like unto Moses, announced for centuries as being the very center of the divine plan for the blessing of all the families of the earth, could not be fulfilled by Mr. Dowie, nor by any other ordinary or extraordinary man, but by him of whom Moses, in the law, and the prophets did write—the Christ.

The more we will examine the subject the more we will find it to expand, and the more we will appreciate the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine plan. The Prophet like unto Moses, the great Law-giver, the great King, the great Mediator, will be the foretold "seed of Abraham," in whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed—through the divine laws which he will enunciate, and the regulations he will enforce. And this seed of Abraham, as we have already seen, as the Apostle has most clearly set forth, consists of our Lord Jesus, as the Head, the chief, and all of his faithful elect church as members—as his body, "which seed is Christ. . . . And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. 3:16-29

In this view of the matter our Lord Jesus was raised up eighteen centuries ago as the "Head" of this great Prophet. He was raised up amongst his brethren, "a first-born among many brethren." He is not ashamed to call us "brethren," although he is the sanctifier and we the sanctified, he is the Head over these brethren; and as such he has been raised—how high? Let the Apostle answer: "Far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named" (Eph. 1:20-23); and the promise to his faithful followers is that they shall be counted with him as his "bride," or, under another figure, as his "body,"—"members in particular of the body of Christ." (2 Cor. 11:2; 1 Cor. 12:27) They also shall be raised, up, up, up. Already these are raised above the condition of the world, in that they have been favored of God, and called with a high calling, a heavenly calling in Christ Jesus. Already they have been raised up, in the sense of being transformed by the renewing of their minds, that they may prove the good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Already they are reckonedly risen with Christ, and walking in newness of life. And these, the members of the body of Christ, have the promise that they shall be raised up still further in due time—that they shall "have part in the first resurrection," to glory, honor and immortality; that they shall be like Jesus, their Head and Lord, and see him as he is, and share his glory, far above angels, principalities, and powers, and every name—Eph. 2:6; Rom. 2:7; Rev. 3:21.

Thus we see that the great work which God began in the person of our Lord Jesus, and in the sacrifice which he made for our sins and in his own exaltation in resurrection power, has not been lying idle since; but a work has been in progress in behalf of the world. Jesus personally has exercised the office of High Priest to and for the under priests, his "body," during this Gospel age, selecting, instructing, fitting and preparing them for the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory in the future in behalf of the world. And we can easily see also that this work of raising up the great Prophet (Head and body) from amongst mankind, to a higher nature, even to be "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4) will soon be accomplished. Then what glory! What

blessing, when this great Prophet, Priest and King shall exercise, in the name and spirit of Jehovah, the authority of earth, to bless mankind, to cause the social uplift which the whole world so greatly needs, but which can come from no other source; to re-train, and ultimately to completely overthrow, the powers of evil, of darkness, and of sin, and thus to purify and cleanse the world and bring in the glorious time promised, when there shall be no more sighing, no more crying, no more pain, no more death,—because the former things of sin, and its penalty, death, will have passed away! All who remain at that time, after that glorious reign shall have completed its work, will be in full harmony, mentally, morally and physically, in deed and in truth, with Jehovah God, and the righteous laws of his empire—all who would not obey the great Prophet, and thus come into accord, having been destroyed from amongst the people according to the divine declaration.

Hallelujah! What a Savior! What a wonderful and comprehensive plan is this, which our great Creator has mapped out, of which we are, first, the subjects, and afterward, by his grace, his active agents in bringing to the world of mankind. O, there is a grandeur in the divine plan which Mr. Dowie evidently has never seen—a grandeur to which he is blind, because the Lord hath not revealed it unto him, be-

cause, even now, in the dawning of the morning, the god of this world still blinds his mind.

A lesson in connection with this subject which is applicable to all of the Lord's consecrated people, is the lesson of humility. Only as we are in a humble attitude of mind can we get a view of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine plan. Otherwise we would continually find our view of God and of his Word and plan obscured by self. Thus the Lord declares that he resists the proud and sheweth his favor unto the humble. Let us, therefore, dear brethren, instead of thinking of ourselves as great ones, on the contrary remember that we are dust, and that as the poet has expressed it,—

"My highest place is lying low  
At my Redeemer's feet,  
No real joy in life I know  
But in his service sweet."

"He that exalteth himself shall be abased; he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." (Luke 14:11; 1 Pet. 5:6) Let us seek to be servants of the Lord and of the flock—faithful servants, ready and willing to lay down our lives for the Lord, for the truth, for the brethren.

## ISAAC, THE PEACEABLE

GEN. 26:12-25 — SEPT. 1.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."—Matt. 5:9.

Isaac signifies "laughter." Abraham laughed with pleasure when informed that he would have a son that would be born in his old age. (Gen. 17:17) Sarah laughed with incredulity when she was informed on the subject. (Gen. 18:12) And again she laughed in joy and appreciation at the time of Isaac's birth, hence he was named Laughter, or Joyous. His life, as recorded in the Scriptures, was rather an uneventful one. As might have been expected from the fact of the age of his parents, he appears to have been rather a quiet, thoughtful, non-resistant child and man, with less of the fire and aggressive energy than displayed by some others. Our lesson covers a considerable period of his life, and the chief points of character which it brings to our attention are, first, his meek, patient peaceable disposition; and, second, his abiding faith in God and in the promises made to Abraham, his father.

As Abraham, in the time of drouth, went southward into Egypt, so Isaac similarly went southward, but stopped in the land of Geras, the king over which was Abimelech. The Lord's blessing was so manifestly with Isaac that Abimelech and the people of that land urged him to move elsewhere, as his prosperity, they imagined, was somewhat at their expense. It is not amiss that we here note the fact that the Lord's blessing upon Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their descendants—Israel according to the flesh—was manifested in temporal prosperity; whereas divine favors to spiritual Israel of this Gospel age are manifested in spiritual prosperity. And since the two prosperities, under present conditions, can rarely exist side by side in the same individual's experience, it follows that those who are in line with the spiritual promises of the present time are generally, in temporal matters, "the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the kingdom." "Not many wise, not many great, not many learned, according to the course of this world, hath God chosen."—Jas. 2:5; 1 Cor. 1:26,27.

It is not a little remarkable that, even in their cast-off condition, the natural seed of Abraham (to whom still belong certain as yet unfulfilled promises of God, which will surely be fulfilled as soon as the spiritual Israel has been selected), are nevertheless so kept and guided by divine providence that in all parts of the world they are comparatively successful in the commercial and literary competition of the world; so that, as Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go from us, for thou art more mighty than we," the various nations of earth feel toward and act toward Isaac's posterity—the Jew is continually asked to move on, because, even though alienated for the time being from the chief blessing of the Abrahamic promise the Lord's hand is with him, and he prospers in his undertakings.

The experiences of fleshly Israel in having no continuing city or country, but being pushed hither and thither throughout the earth for now several centuries, should have produced in at least some of that nation a spirit of humility and of patient waiting for the Lord, and his fulfilment of his gracious promises to them. And we are glad to hope that such

will be found thus exercised and ready for the kingdom at its inception; and yet amongst the Jews, as a people, we notice comparatively little faith and comparatively little meekness—especially amongst their wealthy ones. Evidently, the majority are not Israelites indeed, and will not be prepared for more than the average blessings upon the world at the beginning of the Millennial kingdom. Nevertheless, we may hope that a goodly remnant of that people are in the condition of heart in which they will be ready to welcome Messiah's kingdom, when the eyes of their understanding shall open, and to join with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the holy prophets of their brethren, who will then be princes in all the earth (Psa. 45:16), in constituting a nucleus of a holy nation, gathered about the earthly phase of the kingdom,—through which shall proceed to Israel and to all the nations the heavenly laws and blessings dispensed by God through spiritual Israel, then glorified with Christ at its head.

The peaceable disposition of Isaac is exhibited in this lesson by the fact that although he recognized himself to be the divinely appointed heir of that land, who should ultimately inherit it; and although, with his large retinue of servants, King Abimelech himself had recognized his superior power; nevertheless, rather than have strife and contention, Isaac moved his encampment a considerable distance away from the place of strife, abandoning some of his rights for the sake of peace. And it was after he had thus relinquished his rights, trusting to God to give him the land in his own *due time* and manner, that the Lord appeared to him (in what manner is not explained), and reiterated to him the substance of the covenant already made with his father Abraham, saying: "I am the God of Abraham, thy father [I still recognize him; he is not extinct; he still has a place in my gracious arrangements and purposes, although he sleeps with his fathers; I am abundantly able, in due time, to resurrect him, and to fulfil to him and to his faithful posterity all my gracious promises]: fear not, for I am with thee [I recognize thee as associated in these promises and an heir with him—I approve also the element of faith in thy character, and thy submission to my times and seasons and arrangements—I appreciate the fact that thou dost not strive to attain the things I have promised, until the time that I am pleased to give them to thee], and I will bless thee and thy seed, for my servant Abraham's sake—[in harmony with the one covenant made with Abraham: you will understand that I am not making a new covenant with you, but merely confirming the original one]"

Many of the spiritual children of Abraham need to learn the lesson of patience—patient waiting on the Lord for the fulfilment of his gracious promises. With quite a good many there is a disposition to hasten matters, to force things; and even questionable methods are sometimes adopted and commended, with the thought that the aggressive ones are more acceptable servants to the Lord than others; but instead of such aggressiveness, as the carrying of the gospel into China

or Africa or India with the sword, being the evidence of a zeal which God approves, it should rather be considered an evidence of lack of faith in God, without which it is impossible to please him. A proper faith in God will lead to a careful study of his Word, of the promises; and a careful study of the promises would show that the present is not the time for conquering the world, but the time for calling out, proving and testing, the elect church, which in due time, as the seed of Abraham, shall be fully empowered and fully commissioned to be both kings and priests, and to conquer the world in righteousness. A proper condition of faith in God must lead his faithful ones to wait patiently for him; praying the meanwhile, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth;" and to expect that when the due time shall come Emmanuel will take the control of the world's affairs, and cause its subjugation and blessing to proceed rapidly and effectively. Now, it is our duty to avoid striving with the world; rather to give place—to permit our rights to be infringed, to wait on the Lord, and to expect that he will provide for us the things and the experiences most helpful to our development as new creatures, and thus to make us fit, "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

Two other circumstances in Isaac's life seem to illustrate his attitude of faith, obedience and patient submission, even more than this lesson. One of these we have already referred to—his submission as a young man, in health and vigor, to be bound by his father as a sacrifice upon the altar. In this complete submission to Abraham, his father, Isaac well typified his antitype, Christ Jesus, and his submission to the heavenly Father, Abraham's antitype, even unto death, even the death of the cross.

The other was the matter of his marriage. Isaac manifested a wonderful degree of patience and trust in the divine providence which he seems to have realized was guiding in all the affairs of his father Abraham, and in his affairs as his son and heir under the promises. He was a full-grown man of forty years when his father Abraham, apparently without consulting him in the matter, sent the servant to select for him a wife, who, when she came, he accepted with full loyalty of heart, as being the Lord's choice for him. We are not setting forth as an example in all respects for the fathers and sons of our day. On the contrary, we believe that some of these matters in ancient times were arranged with a view to the typical lessons embodied in the various circumstances and affairs of life. Isaac, as the type of Christ, was fully submissive to the

will of his father, as a type of Jesus' submission to the divine will respecting the selection for him of the Gospel church, to be his Bride and joint-heir in the great promises respecting the world and its blessing. Our Lord Jesus is fully in harmony with the Father's will respecting whom, how many, and of what character, shall be the joint-heirs of his kingdom. The force and beauty of the picture is seen when we recognize the servant Eliezer as representing the divine message, the Spirit of the Word of truth, sent forth of God, to gather during this Gospel age a people, a little flock, who shall constitute the bride, the Lamb's wife, and thus be members of the body of the antitypical Isaac.—Acts 15:14; 2 Cor. 11:2.

The characteristics of God's dear Son must be found in all those who will be eventually accepted as his bride and joint-heir. This will include the great faith in the Father which the Lord Jesus exercised, and which was typified in Isaac's full trust and submission. So, then, it is for us who are seeking to make our calling and our election sure to this gracious part in the divine plan, to be peaceable, peace-loving, gentle, willing rather to retire and be nonresistant, where no principles are at stake, where no command of the Lord is to the contrary. We can well afford to sacrifice earthly interests, since the promises to which we are heirs belong to the future, and are so exceedingly abundant, more than we could ask or think, that their attainment will far more than compensate for any incidental losses or deprivations as respects the present time.

The Apostle says, "We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise" (Gal. 4:28)—Christ, our Head, and we, his members, are the antitype of him who was called "Laughter," or "Joyous." And do we not have more joy than others, even in this present time? True, we have a full share in the trials and difficulties and sorrows and disappointments that cause the whole creation to groan and travail in pain together; yet we have what they do not have—"the peace of God which passeth all understanding, ruling in our hearts" and enabling us to be "joyful in tribulation also," knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and all the various fruits of the spirit which, when perfected in us, shall bring us to the complete joy and rejoicing of the heavenly kingdom. And if this name, Joyous, applies to us in such degree in the present time, what shall we say of the glorious future, when joined to our Master in the glories of his kingdom we shall cause the knowledge and blessing of the Lord to fill the whole earth, and bring laughter and joy to a world of mankind, now weak and groaning under the administration of sin and death? "Praise God from whom all blessings flow!"

## THE WORLD'S HOPE NOT IN MISSIONS, BUT IN THE KINGDOM

From time to time we have demonstrated that there is no hope of a general world-blessing through Christ along the lines generally held by Christian people—the conversion of the world by present-day missionary efforts. We herewith supply additional evidences on this subject from highly creditable sources—not with a view to casting disrespect upon all missionaries, but in order to demonstrate afresh that this foreign mission world conversion delusion is doing positive and serious harm to the Lord's true people, in leading to false expectation and, consequently, to misdirected efforts.

Foreign missions were undertaken with two convictions; one correct, the other false. (1) The *correct* Scriptural conviction that the only name by which any can be saved is the name of Jesus:—faith in his sacrifice, and obedience and devotion to him. (2) The *false*, unscriptural conviction that there is no hope for any who die in ignorance of the only name whereby we must be saved. These intertwined theories have been the cord which has drawn hundreds of noble lives to self-sacrifice, especially during the first half of the past century. It is the cord also which has drawn, and still draws, from sympathetic purses, millions on millions of money. And we need not wonder if the money has, in turn, drawn some into the missionary work simply for an honorable and easy living.

We are not objecting to the sacrifice of noble lives and consecrated money, either; for we firmly believe that lives and money *given* with sincerity have been pleasing to the Lord; even though given under some serious and discreditable misapprehensions of the divine character, and plan of human salvation. We object that this mixture of truth and error is very injurious to God's people, in that it diverts their hearts and efforts away from the truth. It draws them away from Bible-study—away from growth in knowledge and in the graces of the spirit. Instead, it inculcates the thought that the chief object of life for all Christians should be the snatching fellow-creatures from the hands of an angry God intent upon throwing them into eternal torment at the hands of demons. Or, if

not this, the making and contributing of money which will pay the expenses of those who do the snatching.

As a result, Christian people "have no time" to study the Father's Word; no time for studying the divine plan, cultivating their own hearts, etc. They say to themselves often, and sometimes, unguardedly, to others—Bible-study! Nonsense, we already *know enough* when we know that millions are perishing—going down to hell. Bye and bye we "hustlers" who have been less careful for our own spiritual development and for Bible study, but more "on fire" and "burdened" for souls, will have brighter crowns than yours—if indeed you "hair-splitting" Bible students are not rejected from heaven entirely.

But a reaction from so unreasonable a position was bound to come with the advance of intelligence: and it has come. People in general no longer believe in the awful devil-god of the past, seeking for any possible pretext for the torture of as many as possible of his creatures. Reason is asserting itself, and man no longer poses as the sinner's only friend to save him from a malicious God. That is too absurd a proposition for the twentieth century. But men will have theories; for theories still, as ever, are the basis of action—the rudder of human effort. It has become evident to all thinkers that one or the other of the strands of the original mission-cord is false, unreliable, rotten. Question: Which of the strands will they reject?

We answer that the true one will be rejected; and the false one will be retained. They will continue to believe that all hope ends with death, and will reject the inspired declaration that faith in Christ is the only hope, and this the only name. They have already concluded and are more and more becoming convinced that, although the name of Jesus is a good rallying cry, especially when calling for missionary contributions, it is *not the only name for salvation*. They conclude, but do not care to declare it in so many words, that "education," "civilization," etc. rather, the only names for salvation. And *salva-*

tion at home and abroad is more and more coming to mean, not a personal relationship to him who is the light of the world, and in whom alone is life everlasting; but rather it now stands for social progress, municipal and national reform—"social uplift." Thus has the false idea of missions and their conversion of the world led God's people farther and farther away from his Word and plan, which, in their zeal without knowledge, they have been rejecting.

To those who are rightly instructed on the subject by God's Word—to those who lean not to their own understandings, but who search the Scriptures daily to be thereby taught of God—the utter failure of missions as respects any hope of ever converting the world to even the imperfect conditions which prevail throughout "Christendom," is faith-strengthening. Because it demonstrates, it proves beyond question, the truth of the Scripture teaching; namely, that God is not yet attempting the conversion and salvation of mankind in general, but is leaving that great work for the future age, to be accomplished by the kingdom of God when it shall be established in power and great glory during the Millennium. It corroborates fully the Bible declaration that the present work of God is the *election* of a church which, finished, polished and glorified with her Lord and head shall, by and bye, fulfill the predicted blessings of all the world as Abraham's seed (Gal. 3:29), fulfilling the petition of our Lord's prayer, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, even as it is done in heaven."

The following discouraging reports of missionary efforts we clip from the *Literary Digest*:

#### "A SWEEPING CRITICISM OF FOREIGN MISSIONS"

"The missionaries' side of Christian missions in foreign lands has been very fully stated from time to time in Christian churches and in the reports of missionary societies and conventions. Not so much has been heard as to how these missions impress others, except in the occasional private reports given by returning travelers. *Reynolds' Newspaper* (London) has lately been devoting considerable space to this topic. In a recent issue the results of some investigations by a special correspondent employed for this purpose are given. These investigations cover the missionary organizations in London—the great center of Protestant foreign missions—as well as the results obtained by them in the chief countries of the Orient. In speaking of the great sums collected from the people of England for this purpose, the writer states that the Church Missionary Society (Church of England) has an annual income of about £404,906 (a little over \$2,000,000). The collection of this money alone costs £25,843 (about \$129,000); administration costs £17,917 (about \$79,500); salaries to nineteen clergymen as association secretaries amount to £5,432 (about \$27,160). The London Missionary Society has an income of about £150,168 (about \$750,840) yearly, while its foreign secretary, the Rev. M. Widdow Thompson, receives £800 (about \$4,000) per annum, and others receive 'proportionately large amounts.' The missionary income of the Wesleyan Methodists for 1899 amounted to £133,690 (about \$668,450), out of which four ministerial secretaries received 'large salaries,' in addition to extra charges for 'children, rent, rates, taxes, house bill, house repairs and replacement of furniture, coals, gas, etc.' amounting to about as much again. The Baptists in 1900 collected £73,716 (about \$363,580) for foreign missions.

"In commenting on the foreign results received for these vast sums, the special agent of *Reynolds' Newspaper* gives the following facts, based on his study of the official missionary reports:

"What are the results abroad? In India, with its great population of 350,000,000, the number of converts made by the Church Missionary Society, after more than a century's labor, is today 35,640, although no fewer than 3,424 agents are at work. How many of these converts are genuine is a different matter. The above number includes the helpless children. In the year 1889-90 there was a gain of 1,836, mostly the babes of converts. Thus it took two missionary agents and a sum of £113,000 to secure one 'convert' babe, or adult, in a year. What a farce! This ridiculous result too, is a falling-off on the previous year. The other societies have even a more unsatisfactory record. Mr. W. S. Caine, M. P., on his recent return from India, writing in the *Birmingham Daily Post*, February 14, 1889, thus sums up his opinion of the attempt to 'Christianize' India: 'Educated India is looking for a religion, but turns its back on Christ and his teaching as presented by the missionary. As far as turning the young men they educate into Christians their [the missionaries'] failure is complete and unmistakable.' A writer in *The Contemporary Review* for February, 1888, gives his Indian experience as follows: 'Christianity has taken but a poor grip of Hindu India. Its votaries are nowhere really visible among the population.

A traveler living in India for two years might leave it without full consciousness that any work of active proselytism was going on.'

"And the alleged converts? The Church Missionary Society for 1900 says: 'At present there is a rather low standard of Christian living.' It is the same as was told some years ago by the Rev. Sidney Smith, that the native who bore the name of Christian was 'commonly nothing more than a drunken reprobate, who conceives himself at liberty to eat and drink anything he pleases, and annexes hardly any other meaning to Christianity.' The London Missionary Society in the 1896 report (p. 186) ask subscribers 'not to despise the low ideas and motives with which they [the converts] come to us.' And, again, at page 145: 'A very large proportion who profess themselves Christians, and are baptized, are so very ignorant that great care and patience are required to make them intelligently acquainted with the fundamental truths of Christianity.' Among the Malay Christians, which the 1899 report of the Wesleyan Methodist Missions states 'furnish us with the great majority of our converts' (page 76), a lady worker writes: 'When one questions them by themselves, the one appalling factor that forces itself upon one is their unimaginable ignorance. In most the anxiety for the daily bread is the largely bulking factor for their consciousness.' Extracts of this description might be indefinitely multiplied.

"In China, the missionaries are now thoroughly disliked, although they have not been interfered with unless their zeal has outrun their discretion, for the Chinese, says Professor Douglas in his book on China (p. 370), are 'singularly tolerant of faiths other than their own.' In the report of the Church Missionary Society for 1900 we are told that 'churches' have been organized by Chinese for the purpose of affording protection in law cases, such as the payment of debts. In 1869 our Foreign Office (Parliamentary paper on China, No. 9, 1870, p. 13) wrote as follows as to Protestant missionaries in China:

"There is good reason to suppose that the animosity which has lately been more intensely shown toward missionaries on the part of the ruling authorities in China is in a great measure to be attributed to the injudicious conduct of the native converts to Christianity. . . . There seems sufficient reason to believe that converts assume and have acted on the assumption that by embracing Christianity they released themselves from the obligations of obedience to the local authorities and from the discharge of their duties as subjects of the Emperor, and acquired a right to be protected by the European power whose religious tenets they have adopted.'

"And again, Admiral Richards, in an official communication to the British government (Parliamentary Paper, China, No. 1, 1892, p. 24), says:

"It seems to be the special aim of missionary societies to establish themselves outside treaty limits; and, having done so, they are not prepared to take the risks which they voluntarily incur, but, on the contrary, are loudest in their clamor for gunboats, as their contributions to the Shanghai press sufficiently demonstrate. . . . It appears to be necessary, after the lessons taught by these occurrences, that some understanding should be arrived at with regard to missionary societies in China. . .

It seems altogether unreasonable that the societies should exercise absolute freedom in going where they please, and then their agents should look to Her Majesty's government for protection.'

"The scandals in connection with the present war in China, published in *The Daily Mail* and other papers, of missionaries engaging with the troops in looting, and inciting the burning of the houses of the Chinese, must give these followers of the great Confucius—who taught a doctrine in no sense inferior to Christianity, and long before Christianity was known—the notion that missionaries are a kind of barbarian horde, whose real object is to plunder and massacre. The number of 'communicants' in Christian churches, throughout China, after half a century's work, is only a few thousands. 'In Ichang,' writes Mr. Little, 'the Bibles that are distributed broadcast are largely used in the manufacture of boot soles,' and, further, that no respectable Chinaman would admit a missionary into his house. In other parts of the country they [the Bibles] are employed to manufacture *papier-mache* tables.

"As to Africa one quotation may suffice. Sir H. H. Johnson, our present Special Commissioner for Uganda, and a man of many years' experience in Africa, says in *The Nineteenth Century* November, 1887:

"It too often happens that, while the negro rapidly masters the rules and regulations of the Christian religion, he still continues to be gross, immoral and deceitful. . . . They [missionaries] may have succeeded in turning their disciples into professing Catholics, Anglicans or Baptists; but the impartial observer is surprised to find that adultery, drunkenness and



lying are more apparent among the converts than among their heathen brethren."

And again:

"I regret to say that, with a few—very rare—exceptions, those native African pastors, teachers and catechists whom I have met have been all, more or less, bad men. They attempted to veil an unbridled immorality with an unblushing hypocrisy and a profane display of mouth-religion which, to an honest mind, seemed even more disgusting than the immorality itself. While it was apparent that not one particle of true religion had made its way into their gross minds, it was also evident that the spirit of sturdy manliness, which was present in their savage forefathers, found no place in their false, cowardly natures. . . .

"It is not on the spread of Christianity that African missions can at present base their claim to our gratitude, respect or support. . . . In many important districts where they have been at work for twenty years they can scarcely number in honest statistics twenty sincere Christians—that is to say, twenty natives understanding in any degree the doctrines or dogmas they have been taught and striving to shape their con-

duct by their new principles. In other parts of Africa, principally British possessions, where large numbers of nominal Christians exist, their religion is discredited by numbering among its adherents all the drunkards, liars, rogues and unclean livers of the colony. In the oldest of our West African possessions all the unrepentant Magdalenes of the chief city are professing Christians, and the most notorious one in the place would boast that she never missed going to church on communion Sunday."

"Considerations of space prevent us following the missionary into other fields of his activity. The tale is pretty much the same wherever we turn. But we have said enough to show how grossly deceived the public are with reference to the doings of our missionaries and the result of their missions. Far be it from us to say that there are not good and self-sacrificing men among them. But we assert that the fruit of their energies is so small, and the work left undone at home so great, that it is nothing less than a criminal act of human folly to give any special encouragement to the missionary movement."

## JACOB BECOMES ABRAHAM'S HEIR

GEN. 28:10-22.—SEPT. 8.

*"Surely the Lord is in this place."*

Although Abraham had two sons, one of them, Isaac, was made the heir of the most of his possessions, and exclusively his heir as respected the divine covenants and promises. Similarly, Isaac had two sons, Esau and Jacob, who were twins; but the former, being born a few moments in advance of the latter, was, according to the laws of primogeniture, his father's heir. So far as we know he did inherit his father's estate, flocks, herds, etc. The divine promise to Abraham was evidently highly appreciated, not only by himself and Isaac, but also by Isaac's sons; but Esau, being less religiously inclined than his brother, set more store by his inheritance of his father's possessions than in his rights as the first-born to the divine covenants and mercies pertaining to the future. Jacob, on the contrary, had an opposite estimate of values. He was quite willing that his brother should have every earthly advantage, but he coveted the special blessing of God, promised to his grandfather Abraham, and renewedly covenanted to his father Isaac.

Severe have been the criticisms which have been leveled against poor Jacob because of his coveting earnestly the best gifts, which his brother despised (1 Cor. 12:31). He is freely described as a thief who stole his brother's birthright, who took advantage of his extremities, etc., and some even go so far as to suggest that his after tribulations were in the nature of divine judgments upon him on account of this transaction by which he became the legal owner of the divine blessing. To us it seems evident that there is a general misunderstanding of this transaction; for we note the fact that Jacob received no reproof from the Lord in respect to this matter, and that none of his experiences and disappointments, while working for his uncle Laban, are even hinted to have been punishments for a wrong done to his brother Esau. On the contrary, the Scriptures uphold Jacob in every particular; not only the Old Testament records, but also the New Testament records of the transaction complimenting him upon his appreciation of the divine promise, and his willingness to sacrifice every earthly interest in order to secure it. As the course of Esau is held up to reprobation, the course of Jacob is in the same proportion held up for our appreciation and approval—the general feature of his course, if not every particular item therein.

The correct view of the situation, as we gather it from the divine record, is this: Esau loved his earthly interests chiefly; Jacob regretted that he was the second-born, not so much because it would hinder him from being the principal heir of his father's property, but chiefly because it would cut him off from being the channel of divine favor in respect to the future blessings which God had promised in his covenant with Abraham. He well knew that his brother Esau was irreligious and estimated his inheritance of the Abrahamic covenant very lightly. Hence it was that one day when his brother returned from hunting, weary and hungry, and was attracted by some soup which Jacob had prepared, that he was willing to exchange anything he possessed for the satisfaction of his appetite—possibly, too, he may not have been too honest—he may have thought to sell the birthright for the soup, and to ignore the bargain subsequently. Indeed, this was the very course he pursued.

Esau's chagrin and tears later on, when he found that the birthright had really passed to Jacob, do not necessarily mean that he appreciated the heavenly blessing; but, rather, that he

understood that he had disposed of all his rank and inheritance as respected his father's estate. Jacob, on the contrary, cared little or nothing for that part of the inheritance; his ambition being centered wholly upon the divine blessing and covenant. He was, therefore, quite willing to flee from his father's house, leaving all the earthly inheritance to his brother Esau, although it properly belonged to him according to the bargain. He counted earthly advantage but as loss and dross that he might gain the divine blessing. Even when, years later, he returned to the vicinity of his father's home, so far from making a demand upon Esau for the temporal things which he had bought from him, Jacob entirely ignored that part of the transaction, and took from Esau not one solitary thing that the latter really valued. Instead of demanding the pound of flesh, according to the contract of purchase, he sent his brother a peace offering, a present of sheep, etc.

Indeed, the entire course of Jacob, rightly understood, seems to us to have been a most noble one. The unhappy part of the bargain was the deceiving of Isaac—Jacob's personating his brother Esau. We are to remember, however, that Jacob having bought all of Esau's rights, had become *legally his representative*, with full authority to take such steps as might be necessary to secure for himself justice;—to secure that which he had contracted for and paid for. In what manner Jacob could have done better to secure to himself that which the Lord's Word concedes he had legitimately purchased, might be open for discussion. But one item connected with it is not open for discussion; that the Lord did not reprove Jacob's earnest coveting of the heavenly promise—which led him, first of all, to the self-denial of giving up his own dinner for its procurement; and, secondly, his willingness to desert all of his earthly interests in his father's house, and to become a pilgrim and a stranger in the world, forsaking all things for this divine promise.

God attested his appreciation of such a character by specially appearing to Jacob that very night, and granting him a vision, in which he talked to him and confirmed to him the original promise made to Abraham and renewed to Isaac, saying, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thou liest to thee will I give it and to thy seed; . . . and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Any man who receives unqualified divine approval and blessing we shall most surely refuse to call a thief, or any other evil name. On the contrary, we shall hold him in high esteem, and shall commend to all of the spiritual seed of Israel today that they emulate the spirit of Jacob, and not the spirit of Esau—that they be ready at all times to exchange the pottage of earthly advantage, and to become pilgrims and strangers; outcasts from home and property, and from all earthly things, for the sake of being inheritors of the same heavenly promises—joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord.

Indeed, only to this class will the divine blessings come. Our earthly neighbors and friends may speak slightly of us—may charge us with ambitious designs, when they learn that we are seeking a heavenly kingdom and joint-heirship with our Lord. They may charge that this is selfishness on our part. But the Lord makes no such charges. He tells us that he is pleased to see us so appreciative of the heavenly promises that we will be ready and glad to give up to others, to yield our

earthly rights in any and every particular, if by any means we may win Christ and be found in him, and be sharers in his kingdom.

To the worldly mind Jacob did a very foolish thing. He should not have thought of the Abrahamic promise as being anything of special value. He should rather have sought out for himself the smoothest and easiest way through life, conciliating his brother Esau, etc. He was foolish to leave a home of wealth and many servants and flocks and herds to go out, a stranger in the world, to earn his own living, to begin at the bottom of the ladder. Quite possibly he felt a little of this sentiment himself, as he fixed a stone for his pillow and lay down on the ground to sleep on the first night of his flight. No doubt, he wondered whether or not he were pursuing a wrong course; whether or not the heavenly promise which he had so much appreciated would ever yield adequate returns. But the vision of the ladder reaching from his head up to heaven itself, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon it, and God at the other end speaking to him and encouraging him, and declaring to him that he recognized him as the heir of the Abrahamic promise, must have fully satisfied the mind of Jacob, and have made him thankful and appreciative of all the steps by which divine providence had thus far led his appreciative and faithful heart. The angels he might possibly understand to mean divine providences—divine care and supervision respecting himself and all his interests and affairs, while the rungs of the ladder would represent the various steps of the divine plan already known to God, by which the promise he had would reach fulfilment.

When he awakened, Jacob was not filled with self-conceit, nor did he say to himself, Evidently I am greater than either father Abraham or father Isaac, for I have never heard that God ever so appeared to them. Rather, he was filled with a spirit of reverence and of awe; and he said, This is a holy place; God is here. I will set up a large stone here as a monument, as a reminder of God's blessing. I may come back this way at some future time, and this stone will remind me, not only then, but afterward, of the great favor which I received of the Lord, in that he was willing to manifest himself to me, and to declare me the heir of his promises. Quite a good many of the Lord's people seem rather to lack the spirit of fear, of reverence, as respects the Almighty. We are not to forget the Apostle's words, that "Perfect love casteth out fear," but neither are we to forget the other Scripture, which declares that "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Whoever has not first received the spirit of reverence, cannot properly receive the spirit of love; and the love will never cast out the reverence, but rather increase it, casting out only the element of terror, of fright.

The Lord's words to Jacob in the vision, "I am with thee, and will keep thee, whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land," became a strength and assurance, a ballast, as it were, in Jacob's life and experiences; his faith grasped the situation, and he felt strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, in the word of his promise. He was ready now for any and all the experiences which might come to him, knowing that according to this promise all things would work out for his good. And so it is with the Lord's people of this Gospel age—spiritual Israel—the church, the body of Christ. When we have believed God, and have trusted in his promises to the extent of forsaking all to inherit their blessing, it signifies our full consecration, our self-sacrifice in the divine service. Then it is that God speaks to us through his Word, and gives unto us exceeding great and precious promises, which affect, not only the interests of the life that now is, but also of that which is to come. Then it is that we are strong in the

Lord and in the power of his might, and that we are able to grasp the situation—that if God be for us the efforts of all who might be against us will prove futile. True, the promises which come to us are not exactly the same as those which were given to Jacob—they are better, grander, higher, than his—heavenly, instead of earthly; and correspondingly we have reason to rejoice, be strong in the Lord and go on our way rejoicing, even more than did Jacob.

Then Jacob made a vow unto the Lord—a promise, a solemn agreement: the basis of this agreement was the Lord's promise we have just quoted, that he should be brought back in safety, and that the Lord would be with him and bless him with the best experiences during his absence. Jacob's vow was based upon the divine proposition above mentioned—that if God would do this for him he would surely be his servant, and that forever. Not only would he worship and reverence him and obey him, as best he could understand his will and do it, but additionally he would honor him with whatever substance he would give him, to the extent of one-tenth.

So it is with the spiritual Israelite; when accepted of the Lord through Jesus, and assured of divine favor and blessing upon his pathway, he says to himself, in the language of the Psalmist, "What shall I render unto the Lord my God for all his benefits toward me?" What can I do in return? No true, noble mind can willingly receive many and continued blessings without desiring and seeking methods of acknowledgement of these mercies—without desiring to make some return in worship, in praise, in gratitude, in obedience.

To us also comes the desire to honor the Lord with our substance. And here the degree of our love and appreciation are further manifested. Oberlin, the poor French minister, reading of the Jewish tithes, said to himself: "Well, I am sure that I, as a Christian, have three times as many blessings as the Jews had. If it was right for a Jew to give one-tenth of his property to God, surely I ought to give at least three times as much as that." Another minister has said, "The man who calls himself a Christian, and gives less than one-tenth of his income to the Lord, is meaner than Jacob, and has a lower standard than the king of Sodom, who was ready to give more than that to God's representative."

The standard of giving is one which has apparently perplexed the Lord's people for a long time. Our suggestion is that the divine favor bestowed upon the enlightened Christian calls not only for one-tenth or three-tenths of his property, but, on the contrary, calls for his *all*. To our understanding he who gives himself to the Lord in consecration gives not only his every mental talent and every physical power, but also gives every dollar that he possesses—yea, most valuable of all, he lays his life at the Master's feet, in harmony with the Apostle's words, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, and your reasonable service." These sacrifices are earthly, and when offered and accepted the newly begotten mind or will is counted as a "new creature;" and at once this "new creature" becomes the steward, the caretaker, of the earthly nature and its affairs;—all that was devoted or sacrificed. Thenceforth it is the business of the "new creature" in Christ to use up in the divine service, as wisely, economically, and yet rapidly, as possible, all the earthly things, interests, hopes, ambitions, etc., that were originally presented to the Lord as a sacrifice. This complete sacrifice, this giving of our all to the Lord, is the Christian standard, and nothing short of this warrants us in considering ourselves footstep followers of our Lord Jesus Christ and his faithful apostles. Surely they gave all that they had. Surely we also must give up our little all if we would be joint-sacrificers and joint-heirs with the King of glory!

## ISRAEL—A PRINCE WITH GOD

GEN. 32:1-32.—SEPT. 15.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"Men ought always to pray and not to faint."—Luke 18:1.

Fleeing from his father's home, Jacob traveled a distance of nearly five hundred miles to Chaldea, the original home of his grandfather Abraham, where his uncle Laban still lived. His esteem for the promise of God had made him a pilgrim and a stranger, a wanderer from home, just as Abraham's faithfulness to the call had taken him from home in the opposite direction. While the blessings God had promised to Jacob were earthly and temporal, and in these respects differed from the promises which are made to spiritual Israelites, nevertheless, in order to prove Jacob's worthiness of the blessings—in order to test his faith in God's promises, he was permitted to pass through various trying experiences and disappoint-

ments. One of these was a love-affair with Rachel, his cousin, for whom he served his uncle in all fourteen years, seven before he got her as a wife, and seven years afterward; his uncle taking a dishonest advantage of him in the arrangement. Nevertheless, we see Jacob's patience and persistency, and note with pleasure that he never for a moment seems to have doubted the promises of God that he should be blessed as the inheritor of the Abrahamic promise.

"Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." would seem to apply well to Jacob's career. So energetic was he in Laban's service, so successful in all that he undertook, so persevering, that his uncle soon considered his ser-

vice indispensable, and was glad to make favorable terms with him to have him remain and take chief charge of his property. Shrewdly Jacob bargained for an interest in the increase of the flocks and herds, etc., as his salary, and practically became a partner. There was nothing dishonest in his making a bargain with Laban that all the brown sheep and streaked and speckled goats should be his; nor was there anything wrong in his scientifically increasing the proportionate numbers of these colored and speckled animals. Laban became aware, before long, that he had a very capable and shrewd son-in-law, and, moreover, that the Lord's blessing was with him. He fain would have had him remain permanently in Chaldea, but Jacob's mind was full of the Abrahamic promise and of the reiteration of that promise to himself in the vision at Bethel, and he desired to return to the land of promise. He surmised, however, not without good cause, that his uncle would use force to restrain him from leaving, or to take from him some of the cattle, etc., which were properly his under the contract, and hence he chose an opportunity for leaving when Laban was absent.

Laban was evidently a powerful sheik, having many servants, and indeed Jacob had become so by this time, as the narrative shows that he was able, shortly after, to give away as a present to his brother Esau, 220 goats, 220 sheep, 30 camels, 50 head of cattle and 20 asses. But when Laban pursued, with the full intention of bringing back Jacob, his family and servants and flocks and herds, God interfered, warning Laban in a dream, saying, "Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob from good to bad"—margin. In consequence of this dream, and Jacob's subsequent fair statement of his side of the case, showing clearly that he had not wronged Laban, but that Laban had repeatedly dealt hardly with him, he was let go on his way in peace.

If we draw a lesson from these incidents respecting ourselves, as heirs of the promises of God, spiritual Israelites, it would be that while our hearts are full of rejoicing in God's promises we should not expect these to come to us wholly without our effort to secure them. If God has promised us spiritual blessings, we should put forth the effort to attain these, just as Jacob had put forth his efforts to attain the temporal blessings promised him. If adversity seems to go with us, and we meet with disappointments and more or less fraudulent conspiracy to take away from us our spiritual blessings, as Jacob met with disappointment which seemed for the time to interfere with his temporal blessings, we, like him, should patiently wait for the Lord, and trust and hope and labor on, knowing that the Lord will bring out the promised results in the end; knowing that he is on our part, and greater than all they that be against us.

We noticed in previous lessons the peaceable disposition of Abraham, and also of Isaac, and now we note that Jacob not only left home and abandoned his share in the father's house, and family property belonging to the birthright he had purchased, rather than quarrel with his brother, but that similarly in dealing with his uncle he refused to quarrel; he submitted himself: he trusted to the Lord to bring out the results rather than to his own strength for a conflict, either mental or physical. The Lord apparently would have the spiritual Israelites learn this lesson: "Seek peace and pursue it;" "Patiently wait for the Lord, and he will bring it to pass." It is not of God's arrangement that the spiritual Israelites should contend with carnal weapons; but rather that they should submit themselves to the powers that be, learning the lessons which accompany such submission; and have developed in them the faith, the trust, the hope in God, necessary to a maintenance of their relationship to him, and growth in his grace.

As Jacob and his caravan approached Palestine his confidence in God, and his reliance upon the Lord's promise to bless him, did not hinder him from taking a wise, generous, reasonable course for the conciliation of his brother. He did not stand upon his rights, and say: I purchased the inheritance, and was obliged to flee from it, and now I am differently situated, and will seek my first opportunity to take from Esau the cattle and substance which he received of my father's estate which are rightfully mine, and should there be any quarrel in the matter, let him look to his own side, for right is on my side and I may exert as much force as is necessary to obtain it. Quite to the contrary of this, Jacob said to himself: I care nothing for the earthly inheritance, I abandoned that all when I left home, and I do not intend to lay any claim to it, now or ever. I merely got what Esau did not appreciate, and now, if he can come to realize that I am not after the property, it will assuage his wrath, his malice, his envy. On the contrary, I will be generous to him; I will send him a valuable present, thus showing him that so far from wishing to take from him earthly goods I am disposed to give him more. Moreover, I will send such a message by my servants as will show

him that I treat him as my superior—my lord, and that I rank myself as his inferior. He shall see that I am neither wishing to take the honors of his birthright nor its earthly emoluments, though all of these were purchased—I resign freely all of these temporal good things and honors, that I may have the Lord's favor, as represented in the original covenant with grandfather Abraham. He carried out his program successfully, and Esau became his friend. The lesson for spiritual Israelites along this line is,—We should not be sticklers for full justice and the last penny in earthly matters. Rather we may use the earthly mammon generously to make and keep the peace, and to forward our spiritual interests. Our readiness to do this will measure or gauge our appreciation of the spiritual interests, in comparison to which earthly blessings, "Mammon" should be esteemed as loss and dross.

#### A MODEL PRAYER

Jacob's prayer at the time he was anticipating a meeting with Esau is recorded in this lesson, and may be considered one of the best examples of prayer to be found in God's Word. It is so full of confidence and trust in God. It recounts the original promise to Abraham, its renewal to Isaac, and its second repetition to Jacob at Bethel, and the Lord's promise there given him, that he would bring him again to his home country. It shows the humility of Jacob's mind, which cried out, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which thou hast shown unto thy servant; for with my staff [only] I passed over this Jordan [when fleeing from home], and now I am become two bands [great companies]." He tells the Lord of his fear of Esau, yet shows that his fear is offset by his confidence in the Almighty. It was at this time, and doubtless in answer to this prayer, that the angel of the Lord appeared to Jacob, and so full of faith in the power of God, and in the promise of God was Jacob that he laid physical hold upon the angel, declaring that he would never let go until he got a blessing.

Here, the lesson proper, relating to Jacob's struggle with the angel, come in. The angel appeared as a man, as was frequently the case in olden times; Jacob had recognized him, nevertheless, and laying hold of him urged that he as God's representative, sent to meet him, should give him a blessing. We cannot suppose for a moment that the angel was not powerful enough to release himself from the grasp of Jacob, and hence that the wrestling and struggle between them kept up until morning light, the angel vainly pleading "Let me go," and Jacob as persistently holding on and declaring, "I will not let thee go unless thou bless me." We must suppose, on the contrary, that the Lord was well pleased to bless Jacob, and had sent the angel for this very purpose; and that the circumstances were intended as an opportunity to draw out Jacob's longing desires in this respect; to demonstrate to himself how much he really desired the Lord's favor, the Lord's blessing. And when the desired result had been obtained—when Jacob had evidenced the intensity of his desire for harmony with God and such blessing as God alone could give—then the blessing came—Jacob's victory. Not that Jacob prevailed to get from God, through his angel, something the Lord was not pleased to grant; but that he prevailed to obtain the coveted blessing by manifesting the zeal, the energy, the patience, and the faith which God was pleased to see and reward.

The lesson of the spiritual Israelite in this circumstance is in harmony with our Lord's words, "Men ought continuously to pray and not to faint." God wishes us to be persistent, and our persistence measures and indicates the depth of our desires. If the blessing in answer to our prayer does not come in the moment of asking we are to continue "instant in prayer,"—patiently waiting for the Lord's due time, faithfully trusting him that he is willing to give the blessing which he promised, even though he may for a time withhold it with a view to our becoming the more earnest in seeking it.

Although Jacob was a natural man, not a "new creature in Christ Jesus," nevertheless his prayer is a model one, in that he did not specify even the earthly things which had been promised him. All he asked was a blessing, in whatever manner the Lord might be pleased to give it. Alas, how many spiritual Israelites seem to have a much less keen appreciation of properties in such matters than had Jacob! Many ask and receive not because they ask amiss, for things to be consumed upon their earthly desires—wealth or fame or temporal good things. (Jas. 4:3) How many forget that the Lord has already promised to take care of the temporal necessities of his spirit-begotten children, and to do for them better than they would know how to ask or to think. How few seem to remember that as new creatures our conditions and desires should be specially for the things that pertain to the new creature, and that it is this class of blessing the Lord invites us to ask for and to wrestle to obtain, assuring us that as earthly par-