

which was the cause of our seeing and accepting the truth as our own.

We believe that we owe you, and the Ecclesia, which we attend regularly, a debt which we shall never be able to pay. We feel as if the Drama was brought here for us alone. With that feeling in our hearts we can see and truly appreciate our dear heavenly Father's great love for us. But we cannot see where we are deserving of such great love.

We are truly happy now; we were not happy before. We could see too much of one another's faults. We sought worldly things, but now we count them "loss and dross," as the Apostle says.

We have your six volumes of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. They are a great help. We spend as much time as we can in reading and studying them. We have taken the Vow. We read your Morning Resolve, and the Daily Heavenly Manna every morning. They are a source of comfort to us. There are many things which I have to be thankful for. I won't try to enumerate them, because my dear heavenly Father has been bountifully blessing me ever since I fully accepted the Lord as my Redeemer. I shall continue to pray for you, dear Brother, and I ask your prayers.

Your brother in the Lord,

VOL. XXXV

BROOKLYN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1914

No. 24

1914—ANNUAL REPORT—1914

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY

For the sake of our many new readers we explain that the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, as the parent organization, represents all the activities in Christian work with which THE WATCH TOWER and its Editor are associated. All the work done through the International Bible Students Association and Peoples Pulpit Association, directly and indirectly, is the work of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. The Editor of THE WATCH TOWER is the President of all three of these Societies. All financial responsibility connected with the work proceeds from the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. From it the other Societies and all the branches of the work receive their financial support. There is nothing unusual in this. It serves to keep the different parts of the work separate. Just so our Methodist friends have a Methodist Book Concern, an Epworth League for the young people, and both Home and Foreign Missionary Societies, besides numerous other aid societies, etc., etc.

Our division of the work was made necessary by the fact that the parent society Charter by the State of Pennsylvania is not by law permitted to hold property in New York State; hence the necessity for organizing a subsidiary society to hold any real estate in New York. Similarly, the laws of Great Britain prevent any foreign society from holding title to real estate there. This necessitated the organization of the International Bible Students Association with a British charter. Thus it comes that we use sometimes the one name and sometimes the other in various parts of our work—yet they all in the end mean the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society—to which all donations should be made.

1914 A VERY NOTABLE YEAR

For instance, we have for forty years been looking forward to the present year as the one in which Gentile Times would expire and the one, therefore, in which we might expect some special manifestation of the transfer of earth's government to its new King, Messiah. We had hoped that the ending of the Gentile Times might have signified the ending also of the church's times, or years, in the flesh, the ushering of all the Lord's consecrated people into the kingdom. The latter expectation brought, we are sure, a great blessing to our thousands of readers. It brought them quickening of spiritual interests, and zeal to know and to do the Master's will. It brought them heart searchings, to see whether or not they were ready for the kingdom. It brought them a condition of peace with God which passeth all human understanding, so that now they are able to rejoice in the will of the Lord, whatever it may be. If the Lord will continue us in his favor, it will matter little to us whether we are on this side of the veil or on the other side—so great are our joys and blessings, and so pronounced the peace which rules our hearts.

In God's providence the present year has been the most wonderful one in the history of our Society. We believe that the Lord has used it mightily in pulling down prejudice, ignorance, superstition and error. It seems as though this year we had the grand climacteric of all previous efforts on the part of God's consecrated people to show forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. In order that the results may be seen in their truly miraculous light, it is proper that we remind our readers that we have no church organization in the ordinary sense of the word, no bondage of any kind, no obligation to pay, either to the parent society or anybody else, either ten per cent. or any other sum. We remind you also that no solicitations for money in any way are authorized by this Society; that every amount, therefore, which has come into our hands, and been used, has been a voluntary donation from a willing heart. We remind you also that it is true of the Lord's people in general, just as the Scriptures tell, that among them are not many rich, not many wise, not many learned, not many noble,

but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the kingdom.

With this before your minds, keep in memory the fact that last year, the year before and several years back, the brethren, THE WATCH TOWER readers, have been spending generously, according to their ability, both of time and money. Now suddenly, as is evidenced in their growing faith in the Lord and the truth, in the fact that we are nigh at the door of the new dispensation, everywhere there has been a willingness to give and much rejoicing in the privilege. Let these few words prepare you for the, to us, stupendous results of the year, which show that about One Million Dollars have been spent in the service of present truth this year by the classes for theatres, etc., and by the Society.

CREATION PHOTO-DRAMA

After two years of preparation, the Photo-Drama was barely ready to give its first exhibition in January last. It did not get properly started with a full swing in America until April. In July we made a start in Great Britain. By September the Drama had begun operations on the Continent of Europe—in Germany, Switzerland, Finland, Sweden and Denmark. By October it had reached Australia and New Zealand. Few can appreciate the amount of labor involved in preparing each Drama outfit. The arrangement and preparation of the films used is comparatively an easy matter. Our difficulty lay in procuring copies of fine art pictures illustrative of the history of the world from the dawn of creation to the present time and into the future. We adopted, and adapted, everything we could find already prepared and suitable to our purposes; but this left hundreds of paintings and sketches to be made, from which in turn to make the stereopticon slides.

With all this accomplished, a still further difficulty presented itself. We wished to have those beautiful pictures hand-colored—really beautiful. To attain our purpose we had some painted in Paris and some in London, while the majority were done in Philadelphia and New York. We required of these artists their very best skill in coloring. We should not forget to say that, with others, our own Art Room turned out a large share of the work. Although we are not adding to the number of panoramas with painted slides, yet the breakage is so great that even now we have twenty continually at work on replacements and in photographing and tinting the Eureka Dramas.

God kindly veiled our eyes as respects the amount of labor connected with the Drama. Had we foreknown the cost of time and money and patience necessary for the start we would never have begun it. But neither did we know in advance the great success that would attend the Drama, and that through it nearly eight million people in the United States and Canada have already heard a glorious message from the Word of God (a precious message that they will never forget), also that other hundreds of thousands in other lands are hearing in their own tongues "wonderful words of life." We had twenty Dramas, which, in four parts, were able to serve eighty cities each day. The audiences varied from four thousand down to less than a hundred, according to place and circumstances.

The Classes which put on the Dramas in the various cities experienced great blessings and also great trials. They had precious opportunities for serving, sacrificing time and money. These faithful sacrifices the Lord rewarded, as he always does. The trials of faith and patience sometimes arose from accidents causing delays in the receiving of films; sometimes from misunderstandings between the friends in connection with the service of the Drama; sometimes through misunderstandings along financial lines because of not being experts in the matter of keeping accounts. But, rightly received, all these trials had their good effect, helping to test love, to develop patience and thus to broaden Christian character. It is safe to say that the Drama has done as much for the friends of the truth

as for the public in general. This is surely saying a great deal; for in one city the newspapers published that in the week following the showing of the Drama their police court records showed one-half the usual criminal cases.

The special advantage of the Drama seems to have accrued to a certain class of people whose faith had well-nigh slipped, who were beginning to doubt the Bible and everything connected with the future. Some of these have written us very beautiful and pathetic letters of appreciation and of thanks to God. Some have contributed to the Society's funds to assist in defraying the expenses of the Drama further.

We had various things to contend with in order to keep the Dramas all busy every day. Train schedules were not always to our convenience. Then, too, the friends who engaged the place of exhibition could not always get the dates that would have served best. In order to adapt ourselves to the various times and seasons, opportunities, etc., it was often necessary to take what might have appeared a very zig-zag course. Hindsight might have enabled us to do better in some instances, but we used the best foresight which we possessed. We had a large force of extremely competent brethren continually at work safeguarding the interests of the Drama and the engagements. Perhaps a sufficient number of mistakes occurred to keep us all very humble, to make us realize that when that which is perfect shall have come and that which is in part shall have been done away, the whole world may move the better in consequence.

The expenses of the Drama were, first, the preparation of the films and the slides. This was considerably accomplished before the Drama started, of course. But the large amount of money necessary for this preparation was not included in the statements of last year and the year before. The friends who contributed the money were quite agreeable that it should be used for this purpose and not be reported until the Drama would begin. Those preliminary expenditures are included in the present financial report. Another item of expense was the railway fares of approximately one hundred and twenty people, their food, shelter and clothing. The shorter the stay in each place, the higher the rates for board, lodging and traveling. These expenses all appear in the financial statement under the head of the Drama expenditure.

However, there is another item of Drama expense which does not appear in our report; namely, the expense borne by the various classes in connection with the Drama presentation. It is difficult to estimate the total, but we do know of three cities which have each spent more than Ten Thousand Dollars in conjunction with the showing of the Drama in their own cities. We believe that it will be safe to say that the total amount expended by the different classes for the preaching of the Gospel through the Drama would total somewhere between \$150,000.00 and \$200,000.00, in addition to what our financial report shows. What a wonderful blessing thus came to the Lord's people! If it is more blessed to give than to receive, as the Master declared, then surely these have had rich blessing.

Quite naturally these heavy expenditures on the part of the different classes caused a considerable decrease in the contributions which otherwise would have come to THE WATCH TOWER treasury. The friends, having given of their substance freely, could not in every case fulfil all of the "Good Hopes" they had entertained at the beginning of the year. Nevertheless, we are sure that a great surprise awaits every reader to see how large have been the contributions this year, notwithstanding the financing of the Drama's expenses in the home cities. The results are greater than anything we have had before.

Doubtless many of our foes imagined that by this time THE WATCH TOWER readers would be disconsolate, disheartened, etc., and that many of them would be regretting that they had spent their money so liberally for the truth. But not so! The spirit of service seems to burn within the hearts of the dear friends everywhere. Gratitude to God, appreciation of the truth and desire for further opportunities of service—these are prompting to love, joy, faith, confidence, rejoicing.

While the field seems riper than ever for the message of the truth since the war began, the Lord's providence is making it clear to us that expenses must be reduced. The twenty Dramas are now reduced to six, and we know not how long they may continue active. One other Drama has been taken over by a brother who engaged to spend Ten Thousand Dollars in the expense connected with the showing of it. The Society always follows the plan of watching the Lord's providences. The more money we receive, the more we spend. As the funds diminish we curtail expenses. We have no desire to lay up treasures on earth; neither must we incur debts. In this connection we should add that so great a work could not have

been accomplished for less than double the amount shown in our financial columns had it not been that all of our managers, superintendents, operators, etc., gave their time freely, voluntarily, merely receiving things needful—which we supplied not only to those who were out in the field operating the Drama, but also to the many in the Bethel home connected with the preparation of the slides, films, management, etc.

THE DRAMA OUTSIDE AMERICA

Splendid reports are coming to us from the showing of the Drama in Great Britain. It has been presented in six different places in London to large and appreciative audiences. It opened at the Prince's Theatre, remaining there for several weeks. Then it showed in various suburban districts of London before reaching London Opera House. The presentation in the latter place has been phenomenal. It showed there approximately five weeks, afternoon and evening daily, including Sunday. In the evening hundreds were turned away—very much the same as when the Drama was shown in the great Auditorium Building of Chicago. In the London Opera House an exceptionally high-class of visitors were present. Several hundred pounds Sterling were voluntarily handed in, thus permitting continuance of the exhibition. By the time the engagement at the Opera House was closed, the interest was so great that the London friends found themselves able to undertake the exhibition of the Drama in Royal Albert Hall—one of the largest and most notable buildings in Europe. It has a capacity altogether of nine thousand, but probably not more than five thousand could be comfortably seated and have a view of the screen. We have yet to hear of the results.

In various other cities of Great Britain two other Dramas have been operating as continuously as possible, the dear friends demonstrating their love and loyalty by their self-sacrificing arrangements for the presentation of the Drama. In Glasgow the Drama had an especially good reception.

Good word reaches us from Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Germany and Switzerland. In each of these very large auditoriums are obtained. The people crowd to see the pictures and hear the lectures. The free Scenarios are taken with avidity. The Lord's blessing is with the work, and many hearts have been made glad. We have just heard from Australia that the Drama there has started and bids fair to be a good success.

THE EUREKA DRAMA WORK

Our readers will remember that reference was made in these columns to the Eureka Drama No. X and No. Y, suggested to the classes and private individuals as useful in connection with their class extension work. These notices appeared in our issue of August 1st, Page 238, and in our issue of August 15, Page 254; also in November 15th issue, Page 2. Our readers will be deeply interested to note the success of these Dramas. They are going into the various small towns, villages, school-houses, in the vicinities contiguous to the owners of the Dramas.

Consider Drama X first. We have sent out a total of fifty-six outfits, but we have had reports from only six of these. These reports certainly are encouraging. They have shown in nineteen different places, sixty exhibitions altogether, with a total attendance of 1,231, an average of over twenty at each entertainment. The X Drama, be it remembered, has no slides, no films, but merely the phonograph musical and lecture records. We trust that the possessors of the other fifty outfits of Drama X are doing similarly good work and that we shall hear from them at their convenience.

Eureka Drama Y reports show as follows: Of the forty-five outfits sent out twenty-nine have reported. They had served two hundred and seventy-two places, giving eight hundred and four exhibitions to a total attendance of 69,053. The average attendance was 86. Three thousand five hundred and ninety-seven cards inquiring for further literature were received. The number of Drama Scenarios and Studies in the Scriptures sold has not been reported, but over a quarter of a million of Scenarios have been distributed free.

How interesting to note the leadings of the Lord's providence! The people in the rural districts seem hungry for just what these Dramas present. We trust that the sixteen other Y Dramas are doing as well as the twenty-nine included in this report, and that we shall hear from them soon. The Lord seems especially willing to bless all of His consecrated ones who seek to devote time, strength and money to His service. These agencies are mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds of error and to the upbuilding of His saints in the "most holy faith," in preparation for the glorious resurrection "change," which we are all hoping for soon.

When we speak of fourteen Dramas being disbanded, we do not mean to say that they are done away with. The operating corps are disbanded. The slides, films, records, etc., etc.,

are stored, awaiting such a change in the Lord's providence as may permit their service to be resumed. We are not without hope of this.

SERVICE IN NEWSPAPERS

As our readers are aware, Pastor Russell's sermons and weekly Bible studies have for several years been very widely published in the secular newspapers. The number publishing is not so large as formerly; nevertheless, we are probably reaching more people than ever, by reason of inserting the sermons in metropolitan newspapers—in New York, Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Baltimore, Washington, Los Angeles.

The difference between the two services is that in the smaller cities the sermons are published strictly as news, the newspapers paying for the stereotyped plates twenty-five cents per column weekly. It is the business with these, conducted by a newspaper syndicate, that has fallen off considerably. The number now publishing the sermons, etc., regularly, is about one thousand.

Newspaper space in large cities is counted too valuable generally to justify the publishing of a sermon of two or three columns weekly. Besides, if one newspaper would publish, the others of the city would decline to publish as news. Furthermore, the publishers claim that since there are many talented men in all large cities, these would expect their sermons also to be published, or else would be offended. To publish the sermons of a large city would be a huge contract. The Society has felt, therefore, that this large field of influence, the large witness to the truth possible through the immense circulation of these papers well justifies the expenditures in this way of some of the money at its disposal. It will be encouraging to all of our readers to know that the sermons are now reaching weekly approximately five million five hundred thousand readers.

We trust that some good is being accomplished. We are continually coming into touch with noble souls being reached in this way, and doubt not that many others are being influenced who have not yet come to the place where they wish to express their interest by writing. The money expended in this department this year has been large; but we believe that it has been very economically spent, and the evidences are that it was wisely spent.

MANY TONS OF FREE LITERATURE

From year to year we have wondered what would be the limit of the capacity of our friends in the matter of the distribution of free literature. The quantities have grown enormously. Many who cannot give all their time in the colporteur work, colporteurs also and pilgrims (indeed, all our readers), have found opportunities for engaging as volunteers in the Lord's service in the distribution of reading matter, which we provide approximately in thirty languages—even the freight or expressage or postage being met from the Society's funds. Indeed, while we supply the literature freely, it is a fact that many of those ordering it are donating largely to the Tract Fund.

It is difficult for people to estimate quantities, especially when the figures run up high. We will not stop to calculate how many car loads of paper went into tracts, nor how many times these papers would girdle the earth. We will merely state the facts in quantities, although we are aware that very few appreciate what a thousand is, or ten thousand, or a hundred thousand, or a million. In a word, then, the total distribution of free literature, during the year just closed, in the United States and Canada alone amounted to forty-seven million six hundred and ten thousand (47,610,000) copies. Of this quantity about two-thirds (30,000,000) were BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLIES, and seven million eight hundred and fifty thousand (7,850,000) were free Scenarios of the Photo-Drama of Creation. Thus you will see that these were good-sized Tracts, containing many valuable lessons for those wishing to read them.

OUR CORRESPONDENCE DEPARTMENT

Naturally the increase of the work has led to great increase in the correspondence. Nevertheless, we have not been able to write the dear friends as fully and elaborately sometimes as we would have liked. The Editor hopes that all the readers will charitably remember that his capacity is limited, and that he cannot do all that he would like to do in the way of answering the letters of the friends. In fact, letters are rarely answered at all unless something in them especially calls for reply. Sometimes the reply is made by sending a marked copy of some of our publications dealing with the subject, which the correspondent has forgotten or failed to see. The Editor hopes that the dear friends will continue to accept THE WATCH TOWER articles as his personal letters to them.

In this way he can best serve the largest number.

The total number of letters received during the year was.....	199,139
The total number of letters sent out during the year was.....	428,273

COLPORTEURING "STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES"

Our readers well know that we esteem very highly indeed the Colporteur Branch of the service. God seems to have blessed it in a wonderful manner. We are glad to be able to report that the falling off in colporteur work during the year was not so great as might have been expected. The Drama work became an attraction to many of the friends, some of whom left the colporteur work to engage in the Drama—later on returning to the colporteuring. A comparison with last year's output shows a less number of volumes put out; yet the figures are wonderfully large. Be it remembered, too, that very few of these books are sold in stores and very few of them sent out from the Office direct in answer to mail orders. Nearly all of them represent the direct exercise of mind and body on the part of a noble band of the Lord's people—brethren and sisters known by the general name of colporteurs. Amongst them are some from the home and family, the shop, the work-bench, the farm, as well as some clerks, bookkeepers, stenographers, draftsmen, teachers, preachers, lawyers, doctors. The more influence any one has the larger is his talent, all of which has been consecrated, if he entered the body of Christ which is the church.

Our enemies have helped us considerably. Their slanderous misstatements undoubtedly stopped some from purchasing and from reading the books, but in other cases their harsh, unchristian words and conduct had a reverse effect to that which was anticipated and intended. Some bought from curiosity. Some said, "If Pastor Russell has something different from the preachers, we would like to see what it is; for we have not been satisfied for a good while with what has been doled out to us—which satisfies neither head nor heart."

At one time we think the colporteurs avoided as much as possible giving the name of the author of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES for fear the customer would be prejudiced. Now, however, many of them are finding that the surest way to interest their customers is to tell them that the books are written by Pastor Russell, and that they are not like other religious books, but absolutely different, both in matter and style, and contain the very subjects they have been perplexed about for a long time—the subjects concerning which they have asked their ministers repeatedly and unsuccessfully.

The Drama has helped also, wherever it has gone, stirring up an interest in the books. Besides, many of the colporteurs have solicited orders for the bound editions of the Photo-Drama of Creation Scenario. We trust that all of our readers feel, as we do, a very warm interest in the colporteurs; and that, as they may have opportunity, they will speak to them words of encouragement; for their way is not always strewn with thornless flowers.

The total output of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES during the year past was more than 2,000 copies daily.

In cloth binding	623,018
In magazine edition	78,000

THE PILGRIM SERVICE OF THE YEAR

The pilgrim service during the year was immense; but for a time it took a little different course from its previous and usual one. Aside from special lectures following the exhibition of the Drama, special series of pilgrim meetings were held in many of the large cities. These sometimes continued every Sunday for months, the local friends providing the auditoriums, the Society providing the speakers. This kept busy the Brooklyn Brethren and necessitated their traveling over considerable distances—to Boston, Washington, Richmond, Providence, Detroit, Buffalo, Cleveland, Toronto, Hamilton, Montreal, Philadelphia, Baltimore, etc. These meetings, while not taking the Brethren long from the Office work, did entail considerable expense for railway fares. However, we believe that the expenditures were wisely made, and that the results justified the efforts and outlay. This extra service is responsible for much of the extra cost of this Department above other years.

Total number of Pilgrims employed.....	76
Total number of public meetings held.....	3,217
Total number of semi-public meetings held.....	2,931
Total number of miles traveled.....	817,475

The expense will be found in the Financial Report.

Some extra services have been cut off. We are endeavoring to trim our sails to the lighter financial breezes. Should the Lord's providence be favorable, you will quickly discern increased activities along all propitious lines.

WATCH TOWER ACCOUNT—1914

Balance on hand 1913.....	\$1,333.95
Traet Fund and Good Hopes.....	414,880.48
Sundry P. & L.	42,419.96
Special Accounts (amply secured).....	107,000.00
	<hr/>
	\$565,634.39

EXPENDITURES.

Free Literature and Newspapers.....	\$125,462.60
Pilgrim Department (advertising, etc.)....	61,686.37
Photo-Drama of Creation.....	314,876.91

To British Branch	24,165.44
To German Branch	14,735.52
To Australasian Branch.....	10,723.68
To China, Japan, Korea, etc.....	5,705.48
To India and South Africa.....	3,845.00
To Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, Polish, French, Italian, Hungarian, Arabic, Greek, Finnish	2,146.30
To West Indies	609.97
Cash on hand	1,677.12
	<hr/>
	\$565,634.39

HOPE AN OUTGROWTH OF CONFIDENCE

"Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward; for ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God ye might receive the things promised."—Hebrews 10:35, 36.

Confidence is another word for trust. The Apostle's thought, then, is, Cast not away your faith, cast not away your trust, which hath great recompense. It seems strange to us, sometimes, that God should purpose to reward faith rather than works. Surely almost anybody else would have made a plan which would have said, I will reward you according to what you can accomplish. But God has declared that he will reward us according to our faith, our confidence, our honesty, our sincerity. Under the present conditions God can do nothing with a dishonest man. During the Millennial age this class will receive the necessary stripes—just exactly what they need—to bring them rightly into accord with righteousness. But for the time being, God is making an appeal only to the honest-hearted.

As we come to the Bible and get it clearly before us, as our eyes become anointed with the holy Spirit and we see into the deep things of God, we find that he has a great, a wondrous plan. When his kingdom shall be established, then all the families of the earth shall be blessed, and the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth. None shall need to say to another, Know thou the Lord; for all shall know him, from the least unto the greatest of them.—Jer. 31:34.

God is not dealing with the world yet, but is dealing with the few. There was a time when he dealt with typical Israel alone. Then, beginning with our Lord Jesus, who kept the law which the Israelites could not keep, and who obtained the blessing accruing from the Law Covenant—from that time God's plan has been, we see, to gather out of all nations and out of all parts of the earth a people for his name, to bear the name of Jesus, to be the bride, the Lamb's wife.

As a woman is joined to a husband and bears his name, so this company is called out from the world to bear the name of Christ. The word Christ signifies, as we know, The Anointed of God, and includes Jesus, the Head of The Christ, and all the members of the church which is his body. God purposed the selection of the church, and he purposed that it should not be accomplished by force, by compulsion. If any have thought that God has been dealing with the world, they have been mistaken. We are told in the Bible that God has been drawing a class, calling a people, a very different thought. Our Lord Jesus is the great Shepherd of the sheep. The sheep hear his voice and follow him.

It is a wonderful privilege to become a member of the body of Christ. God is not forcing any one to become a member. How strange it would be for us to think that he said, If you do not become a member of the bride class, you shall go to eternal torture! Nay, dear brethren, he lays before us the grandeur of the divine plan, that seeing it, we might be eager to become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord. This is set before us in the Bible as a great prize, "a pearl of great price." If we do not care to come in under the invitation given, then we need not come at all.

AN HONEST HEART—A WILLING MIND

We remember that the Apostle declares that the Gentiles rejoiced that they had been accounted worthy to hear. (Acts 13:48) Do we realize what an honor it is that God has asked us to hear his message? It is a great honor, to our understanding. The one thing that is the basis of God's favor is sincerity. There are people who are born dishonest, born insincere. The message was never designed of God for a dishonest mind.

There is something about the dishonest, insincere, self-sufficient, that would surely lead them to take a wrong course. We think of a gentleman—a well educated man, an engineer. He was well-balanced mentally and could talk on any subject. One day we told him something of the divine plan and of the call of the church. He replied, "Well, I do not care to have

anything to do with it. I do not wish to have my sins forgiven; I wish to bear the penalty of my own sins. If other men are going to get along, I shall get along, too."

Jesus said that if one would receive his message, he must receive it as a little child—in that pure, simple manner that a little child would receive a message. It is natural for a little child to be full of confidence. How often we hear a child say, "My papa can do anything! My papa says thus and so." And so the heavenly Father would have us honest, faithful, full of confidence in him, trusting what he has said, not doubting. He would have us to be loyal to him.

"Cast not away, therefore, your confidence," said the Apostle. He had been telling these Christian Hebrews that they had a good degree of confidence. They had accomplished a good work. They had endured hardness in various ways, partly while they themselves were made a gazing-stock, and partly while they were the companions of those who were so used. The Apostle went on to say that God was not unjust to forget their labor of love.

A POTENT TEST OF LOYALTY

But, dear brethren, it is not enough to make a good consecration; it is not enough that for a time we fight a good fight. No, indeed! God is not accepting to the kingdom those who once were faithful. He desires to have those who were once faithful, who were afterwards faithful, who are always faithful! He desires to have in the kingdom class those whom he can trust implicitly, those to whom he can safely give the glory, honor and immortality that he has promised to the faithful. And before they receive this high reward and exaltation, they must be thoroughly tested and proven. We see the reasonableness of this arrangement in every particular. If "he has called us to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ," he expects us to be found worthy of that honor—not that we could do anything to make ourselves worthy of so great exaltation, not that we could merit it in ourselves, but he expects us to be true overcomers, and to develop the character necessary for so high a position of responsibility and glory.

Have you given God the glory in all the affairs of your life, in whatever measure of success you have attained in his service? or have you often taken the glory to yourself? This is a good question for each one of the Lord's children to ask himself. We know that we have deserved no glory whatever in connection with what we possess or what we have accomplished. If any have attempted to take glory to themselves, they have taken the glory from the Lord. We must be so loyal that in presenting the truth to others we will say, "This is not my plan. I am glad to tell you anything that I know about it, but it is not man-made. It is all God's plan."

So, then, let us remember the Apostolic injunction: "Cast not away your confidence." What confidence are we to have? Confidence in God. In whom else could our confidence be placed? Many of the world have no confidence except in themselves. Others place their confidence in some earthly hero. One man says, I have confidence in King George; I will follow him to death. Another man says, I have full confidence in Kaiser Wilhelm; I will follow wherever he leads. A third man declares, I have great confidence in President Wilson. What does President Wilson or any of these rulers know about the future? No one but God and he who is executing God's will, know to a certainty, except in so far as God has seen fit to reveal his purposes.

We as the Lord's people look up and see our great Creator's wonders in the heavens, and we say, How great is our God! Then as we look at ourselves and find how wonderfully we are made by our Creator, so that by thinking, by the power of the mind, we can move the different parts of the body—the hands, the feet, the eyes—oh, we say, this is the most wonderful ma-

chine in all the world! And so we are led to exclaim, Surely this great God, our God, our Father, is willing to tell us, his people, who love him and desire to know his will, what his will is! He must have a good plan; for he is wise, he is loving, he is just.

CONFIDENCE PROPORTIONATE TO KNOWLEDGE

And so we have found our old Bible, which perhaps was long covered with dust, and we have studied about God's justice, wisdom, love and power. And we have learned to have confidence in that dear old Book; for its message is so consistent, so reasonable, so loving. The Bible explains how sickness, sorrow and pain came to be in the world. It informs us that all these came as the result of sin, and that from the very beginning God foreknew the fall, and purposed the restitution of mankind from sin and death. The Bible points out that the blessing to all men would come when Messiah would come.

Thus we have confidence in the Word of the Lord and in the great plan presented in that Word. And we have confidence that God has invited us to be joint-heirs with Christ in his kingdom, that he is taking out a people for his name—those who will confess their sins, will acknowledge that they themselves are not great—those who will, when they receive God's favor, be so loyal to Him that they will be ready to lay down their lives.

Ah, yes! Others lay down their lives for earthly kings, and we have a King of kings and Lord of lords, and if we could not lay down our lives in loyalty to him, what would we think of ourselves! We have a good God, worthy of all confidence, and we trust him. In proportion as we have knowledge of God, of the Bible, in proportion as we have grown in grace by seeking to walk in the narrow way, in that same proportion our confidence is growing stronger and stronger.

CONFIDENCE INDICATIVE OF HEART CONDITION

The only question remaining is, Will we be found faithful? The Scriptures declare that he is faithful who has promised, and that he will do exceeding abundantly more than we could ask or think. He has determined that all who will receive the great blessing will be those who will demonstrate their loyalty to the fullest degree. Hence the Apostle urges, "Cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward."

God will one day reward our confidence. Why is it that the Lord will especially reward our confidence? The reason is this: Our confidence in God represents our heart condition, and it will go down like a barometer in falling weather if we lose our faith. Our hearts cannot be wholly stayed on God except as we are strong in faith. The only instances in which Satan will be permitted to take away the confidence of God's people will be in the cases of some who have not been living up to their light. The Lord will permit such to go gradually into darkness.

So we are to keep firm hold of our confidence; for this assures us that God is our Father. We all know something of the wireless telegraphy which is now being used in a marvelous manner on the sea and on the land. And this is only a feeble illustration of the wireless communication that maintains between the true Christian and the heavenly Lord. In every circumstance this confidence, leaning on the Lord, will look to him. There will be the wireless communication between Father and child.

When the Lord's people find themselves in difficulty, they should reason like this: What is the Lord's will? What does his providence indicate? He has said that all things shall work together for good to me because I love him; therefore, having confidence in God, I am sure that all things shall indeed work out for my good. I have faith in his wisdom and his power and his love. He could have protected me from this difficulty had he seen best. So the fact of its reaching me proves that he saw fit to permit it for a wise reason. He has promised that he will not suffer me to be tempted, tried, beyond what I am able to bear. As he is faithful, he will never fail to keep that good promise. So then, I will "not cast away my confidence, which hath great recompense of reward."

CONFIDENCE IN GOD TO BE TESTED

If God would reward according to works, some of his children would get very little. The very ablest of God's people cannot do very much. We spend one-third of our time in sleep; we need perhaps eight hours more for preparing our food, etc.; and we have a thousand and one things to do in the remaining eight hours. How little time we have, after all, even if we have cut off many things that once took more or less of our time! The most intelligent people have very little time to spare.

Do your very best, and try to note how little you will be able to accomplish by the close of the day. Think of those

five minutes, that half hour, etc., and count up and see how much you render to the Lord your God daily. We fear that each of us would be ashamed to see how little time the sum total would make. And if the reward depended on our works, it would surely be a very small reward. God knows also that some have more time at their disposal and some less, and that some have more talents and some less.

Some are able to give ten times as much as others. How much would you like to do for the Lord? How much do you strive to do for the Lord? It will be in proportion as you have confidence in him. As you come to have more trust in the promises, you will try harder and harder to live up to all the terms and conditions of discipleship. If you have but little confidence in the Lord, you will be like the man who was told that if he would go to a certain place he would find a fortune, and who replied, It is absurd to consider anything of the kind! If some one should say, Behind a curtain in a certain corner there is hidden a bag of gold, and any one who will go there for it may have it, it would be safe to say that not two persons out of a hundred would go to look for it.

God is testing your faith, your confidence, and our own. And, oh, that is worth so much more than all the wealth of the world! We have been invited to try for the great prize. We said, Yes, Lord! Yes, Lord! Then he said, Will you be faithful under the conditions which I impose? I am watching to see how faithful you are every hour, every minute. I will protect you from the pitfalls in the way, as you strive to show forth my praises; I will uphold you in every trial. My dear children, I want to give to you a great blessing. You have all entered on a common basis. You would be very unequal in the race if I should take you according to your natural qualifications. I will judge according to your heart and how you do in little things. He that is faithful in the little things, in that which is least, will be faithful in that which is greatest. I will reckon the matter thus. That is a fair proposition, and exactly what the Lord says. God purposes to reward greatly all faithfulness.

THE NATURE OF THE PRESENT TEST

But there is another phase of the confidence. Bible students all over the world have been expecting certain things to occur; and we have been hoping that the Lord's time is near for the setting up of the kingdom, the time for the fulfillment of the prayer, "Thy kingdom come." We have been hoping for this; but if it should not come as soon as expected, we will still hold fast our confidence.

There are not many people in the world who are hoping to die soon; and it is only our confidence that makes us have this hope. If we did not have a strong confidence in the outcome, then we would not have the desire to pass beyond the veil. We are speaking of our confidence to those whose eyes of understanding have been enlightened to see the lengths, the breadths, the heights and the depths of the love of our God, and to know something about the times and seasons of our Father's plan.

The Apostle tells us, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all children of the light, children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness." (1 Thess. 5:4, 5) God has promised that he will give his true children the light at the time appointed, and that they shall have the joy of understanding his plan at the appropriate season.

"What more can he say
Than to us he hath said!"

The Editor has been rejoicing in these blessed experiences. Even if the time of our change should not come within ten years, what more should we ask? Are we not a blessed, happy people? Is not our God faithful? If any one knows anything better, let him take it. If any of you ever find anything better, we hope you will tell us. We know of nothing better nor half as good as what we have found in the Word of God. As the hymn expresses it:

"It satisfies my longings
As nothing else can do."

Personally, we can say, If God has some further experiences for us, we are glad that he has; if we need further polishing, we hope he will give it to us. If it takes a year to get the polishing necessary, we desire to have this time allotted. Or if he desires to have us do some work in the polishing of others, and if we should not get into the kingdom ourself, we would be glad to have his will done.

We have sometimes asked, How many brethren would be willing to take a thousand dollars for what they know of the truth? Not a hand was seen! Who would take ten

thousand dollars? None! Who would take a million dollars? Who will take the whole world in exchange for what he knows about the divine character and the divine plan? Nobody! Then we said, You are not a badly discontented crowd, dear friends. If you feel so rich that you would take nothing in exchange for your knowledge of God, then you feel just as rich as we do.

CONFIDENCE LOST

The Editor has known from earliest childhood what it is to call God his heavenly Father; for he had Christian parents. And then, when fifteen years of age, we gave him our heart, and revered and worshiped him with what amount of knowledge we had. Although indoctrinated along Calvinistic lines to believe that only the elect would reach glory, and that all the non-elect would experience eternal torment, we were accustomed to think of ourself as one of the elect, and to appreciate the love of God, which had provided for the salvation of the elect.

A few years later, however, reason began to assert itself over superstition. We inquired of ourself, Where is this hell which you preach? What do you really know about it? Confessing our own ignorance, we went to our teachers and elders; but to our amazement we found that they knew no more about it than ourself. Then we stopped preaching and began to think and to examine the creeds. We found that the difference between them was trivial. All had the one foundation of heavenly salvation for the few and eternal woe for the thousands of millions.

The more we investigated, the more sure we felt that a great mistake had been made; that a real God could not have made such an arrangement as our creeds declared. We threw them all away; and thinking that the Bible was the basis for them all, we threw the Bible after them.

SOUL-HUNGER FOR GOD

But having once known our heavenly Father, we could find no rest without him. Our soul hungered for his love and care. We still held to the great fact that our Universe had an intelligent, personal Creator; for his wisdom and power were before us on every starry night. The more we studied anatomy, the more thoroughly we became convinced that all humanity, yea, every creature, is "fearfully and wonderfully made," and that the eye, the ear, the nerves, the power to move in response to mere thinking, could not have come by chance, could not have been evolved by a nature god. We worshiped the God of wisdom and power, and sought to know more of him, confident that we should find him good.

Left to the resources of our own brain, we reasoned, Could

others and ourself possess as the gifts of our Creator the qualities of justice and love, which we esteem to be the very highest of our faculties, and yet the Creator himself be devoid of these attributes? Our mind answered, Surely he who formed the eye to see and the ear to hear and who gave humanity the qualities of justice and love must possess these qualities in infinite measure.

Thus with the eyes of our understanding we beheld the great God of the universe, infinite in wisdom, justice, love and power. Again we worshiped him, rejoiced that we could have confidence in our God and realize that he had made neither the earth nor the race of mankind in vain, but that he had some wise, just, loving purpose in connection with our creation.

CONFIDENCE REGAINED

Our next thought was, Would not a just and loving God be pleased to make known his purposes to those of his creatures who desire to do his will? Would he be ashamed of his purposes? Would he ignore the qualities of mind which he has given us? Again our mind answered, You may confidently seek God's message to humanity. Thinking that we had already examined the Bible sufficiently, we turned our attention to heathen religions, only to find them less rational in some respects, though less fiendish, than our own creeds. Evidently the most intelligent peoples have been the most thoroughly seduced by Satan and his doctrines of demons, into believing the most horrible things respecting the Creator and his purposes toward his human creatures.

Finally, we resolved to begin anew the study of the Bible, first assuring ourself that our colored creed-spectacles were thoroughly broken and our mind entirely untrammelled. Gradually the Lord led us to clearer and yet clearer light upon his Word, until we found that the basis of all our difficulty lay in the fact that we had followed Satan's lie told to Mother Eve in Eden—"Ye shall not surely die." From that time onward the entire Bible became illuminated, grand, beautiful, harmonious; and now it stands pre-eminent before our mind as God's Word!

No tongue or pen can tell the peace, the joy and the blessing which a clear knowledge of the true God has brought into our heart and life. The story of God's wisdom, justice, power and love fully satisfies the cravings of both our head and our heart. We are seeking no further. There is nothing more to be desired than to get this wonderful story more clearly before our mind, and to appreciate more and more the divine character as illustrated by the great divine plan of the ages, which our heavenly Father is gradually outworking for the blessing, first of the church, and afterwards of all the families of the earth.

SAVIOR OF THE WORLD

DECEMBER 27.—2 Corinthians 5:14-21.

"Far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."—Galatians 6:14. R. V.

Today's Bible Study reminds us afresh of the fact that Jesus is not merely the Savior of the church, but that he is also the Savior of the world. In the past, Bible students have overlooked this great truth, to their confusion. Now we see that God has provided two distinctly different salvations—the one for the church in the Gospel age, and the other for the world in the age to follow this—the period of Messiah's kingdom.

Not only do we see that there are two different salvations, but also that they are wholly different, totally different in kind. They are alike in some things, however. Both are salvations from sin and from its power and its penalty, the curse—sorrow, pain, crying, sighing, dying. Both are salvations to an everlasting happiness. But there the similarity ends; for the church is to be saved by a change of nature, while the world is to be saved without a change of nature—by a resurrection to the perfection of human nature.

The church's salvation, which is now in progress, has its beginning in the "hearing" of faith. The message of God's grace is proclaimed here and there by stammering lips, which do not appeal to many of the great or wise or learned, but chiefly to the poor of this world, rich in faith. Such of these as are of humble mind, of "broken and contrite heart," are charmed with the message of forgiveness of sins and reconciliation to God through the Redeemer. As they approach and seek to draw near to God, he through his providences draws near to them. If they continue to hunger and thirst after the Lord and his message, he will satisfy them. He will show them his covenant. He will enable them to understand the terms and conditions upon which they may be received back into fellowship with God as dear children—no longer aliens, strangers, foreigners—no longer condemned to death, but on the contrary justified to life.

Here comes to them another test of their love of righteous-

ness, their hunger for fellowship with God; for the requirements made of them seem at first to be exacting. These requirements, as stated by the Master himself, are: "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself [renounce his own self-will], take up his cross [begin to live contrary to his own preferences in that he will do according to the divine will, instead of according to his own will, where it crosses the divine], and follow me." Then he must continue to follow in the Master's footsteps—faithful unto death.

Some, upon learning of these stringent conditions of discipleship, turn back and follow no longer in pursuit of the Lord's favor, forgiveness, reconciliation, blessing, begetting of the holy Spirit. It is their option; and their course will decide their worthiness or unworthiness to be counted in with the special class whom the Lord is now selecting from the world to be the church—"the bride, the Lamb's wife."

THE BLESSINGS OF FAITH

We are not to think of those who reject the Lord's cross and refuse to make a full consecration of their lives as being, therefore, condemned either to eternal torment or to anything else. The call of the Gospel age is a favor and a privilege. Those who respond get a special blessing; those who reject miss that special blessing. They are not condemned (damned) in any sense of the word because of rejecting the privilege of walking in the Master's steps. On the contrary, as the Scriptures declare, they were already condemned—condemned in Adam, because members of his family, sharers of his weaknesses and unworthiness of life—sharers of his death sentence. They failed to escape from that condemnation, and thus they continue under it.

It is of the church class only that St. Peter writes, "Having escaped the corruption that is [still] in the world." (2 Peter 1:4) As the Apostle Paul wrote, "We were children

of wrath, even as others [still are].” (Ephesians 2:3) By believing in Christ, by accepting his terms, by becoming his disciples through full consecration, we secure forgiveness for the sins that are past, and additionally secure relationship with the heavenly Father through our Redeemer, our Advocate. Now his acceptance of us is by and through the begetting of the holy Spirit, and this is granted to none others than those who come by his appointed way.

Those begotten of the holy Spirit are Scripturally styled “new creatures in Christ.” To them, “old things have passed away and all things have become new.” They have new aims, new objects, new hopes in life. To them, earthly things have no value, except as they can be used to glorify the Lord and to serve him. Earthly learning, reputation, honor, titles, are valuable only as they can be used in some way to the glory of God—in the service of his cause or for the benefit of fellowmen, especially those of the household of faith. To these, earthly prospects, political hopes and ambitions, etc., are nothing; for they have before their mind’s eye heavenly prospects, which include joint-heirship with Christ in his Messianic kingdom of a thousand years and, after that, additional glory and honor in the ages to follow.

But all these blessings, you note, are heard with the ear of faith, seen with the eye of faith. Thus the Lord selects and draws only those who can and do exercise faith; for “without faith it is impossible to please God.”

Those who either never hear, or hearing fail to respond, or responding go for a little way and then stop when they come to the crucial test of self-denial, self-renouncement—these lose all those spiritual blessings which the others, if faithful, will attain—heavenly honor, heavenly glory and immortality through the change of nature begun at the time of their begetting and to be consummated in their complete change in the first resurrection. These the Apostle describes as “sown in weakness, raised in power; sown an animal body, raised a spiritual body; sown in dishonor, raised in glory.”

But even those who lose God’s highest blessings and rewards will still have open before them great and wonderful favors of God, all of which were purchased by the Redeemer’s precious blood—by his sacrifice for our sins, by his submission of his life for the forfeited life of Adam, for the recovery of Adam and all his race from the sentence, or the curse of death. These blessings for the world, however, are not to be clearly seen or appreciated yet, except by those who are especially taught of God—those who have been begotten of the holy Spirit and thus enabled to understand “the deep things of God.”—1 Corinthians 2:10.

“THE COMMON SALVATION”

The point we are here especially making is that God has provided a salvation for the world, as well as a salvation for the Church. The Bible tells us of the general facts of these salvations. It assures us that “God so loved the world [as well as the Church] that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16) We noticed at first that the penalty that is upon the world is not an eternal torment penalty, but a penalty of destruction. Christ died that the race might not perish, but in due time recover from the death penalty through faith in Christ and obedience to him.

Only the few can exercise the great faith that is necessary to a place in the heavenly reward as members of his bride class. By and by, when the knowledge of God shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep, all will understand; all will hear and be able to believe in God’s goodness and in his wonderful arrangement on man’s behalf. Those who will then believe, and who will then accept God’s favor on its terms of loyalty and obedience to the best of their ability, will be blessed by Messiah’s kingdom.

The blessing, as the Bible describes it, will be the rolling away of the curse and the rolling on, instead of the curse, “the blessing of the Lord, which maketh rich; and he addeth no sorrow with it.” This work of rolling away the curse and rolling on the blessing is the appointed work of Messiah’s kingdom for a thousand years.

We may be sure that by the time his kingdom shall end, and shall be delivered up to the Father, our Lord will have fully accomplished all the great work which was committed to him of the Father and for which he has shown his worthiness by his co-operation in the Father’s plan, to the extent of dying for the race. And this King of Glory, Messiah, will have for associates those who, like himself, delight to do the Father’s will—those who delight to walk in his steps. His perfection, his sacrifice, making good for their defects through the fall, enables them to become joint-sacrificers with him. Of these the

Apostle writes, “For if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him; and if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him.”

NEW CREATURES IN CHRIST

In today’s Study St. Paul deals especially with the church class. He explains to us that it is the love of Christ that has exercised the constraining, or drawing, power upon our hearts. The love of Christ is merely the love of the Father, but as men we would not be able to understand the Father’s love. We are enabled to understand that love as it was manifested by our Redeemer; and thus through him we look upward to the Father, and are able to appreciate something of the love that is beyond all human understanding. As St. Paul points out, Christ’s love was manifested in that he died for all. When we say “for all,” it means that the whole race was dead, that none had a right to everlasting life, and that none could commend themselves to God so as to be worthy of everlasting life.

The Apostle explains that all who realize this matter fully, clearly, should indicate the fact by consecrating their lives to the Lord, to live unto him, to know his will, to lay down their lives in the service of him who died for them and who rose again. These have a special love for the Lord and they, properly, have a special love for each other. They are seeking to live, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit—in harmony with the begetting of the holy Spirit, which they have received.

Hence they more and more are thinking of Christ, not as the Man Jesus, but as the glorified Lord. So also they are learning to think of each other, not according to the flesh, but according to the heart; for “if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.” To such, earthly things—earthly hopes, aims and prospects—have gone, and all things have become new. They have new hopes, new ambitions, new relationships. If faithful, they will receive the glorious things which God has in reservation for those who love him.

These things are of God. They are not of the Apostle’s making up, nor of Jesus’ origination. The Father himself originated the whole plan and arrangement. He has already reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ. We are fully given over to him. We have no rebellion in our hearts. He has reconciled us to himself through his Son; and God has nothing against us. “There is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.” Their sins are forgiven. Instead of condemning them, God justifies them. As St. Paul says, “It is God that justifies; who is he that condemns? It was Christ that died,” giving full satisfaction for our sins.

THE SERVICE OF RECONCILIATION

These new creatures, begotten of the holy Spirit, are given a work to do. They are not only to have a work in the future as kings and priests, joint-heirs with Christ in the blessing of the world, but they have a work to do at the present time, a work for God. They are to be ambassadors for God. They are to be his representatives amongst men. They are to seek to tell the message of God’s love to those who do not understand it. They are to tell the way of return to God to those who know not the way and to those who give evidence of a desire for reconciliation. They are thus ministers, or servants, of the way of reconciliation even in the present time. All those reconciled in the present time by faith and obedience are privileged thus to become members of the bride class—joint-heirs with Christ in his kingdom.

In the 20th verse it will be noticed that the word “you” is in italics, indicating that it is not in the original. The passage does not read properly with the word “you.” It should be omitted. God is not beseeching the church through the church, or through each other, to be reconciled; for all of the church are reconciled.

The Apostle is telling us that God through us is beseeching or urging mankind—all who have the hearing ear—to be reconciled to him, telling them that he is willing to be reconciled to them, and explaining the basis of this reconciliation; namely, that Christ took the sinner’s place, that he personally knew no sin, but was holy, harmless, separate from sinners, and that those who receive this message may have the privilege of coming into the righteous condition acceptable to God, and thus of being inducted into the bride class, who will complete the royal priesthood beyond the veil, and for a thousand years have the glorious work of blessing all the families of the earth.

And while the earth with strife is riven,
And envious factions truth do hide,
Lo! he, the Lord of earth and heaven,
Stands at the door and claims his bride.

ISRAEL'S EXPERIENCES TYPICAL, ALLEGORICAL

JANUARY 3.—Judges 2:1-19.

NATURAL ISRAEL'S ENEMIES—SPIRITUAL ISRAEL'S ENEMIES—NATURAL ISRAEL'S JUDGES OR DELIVERERS—SPIRITUAL ISRAEL'S REFORMERS AND HELPERS—TYPICAL IDOLATRIES AND THEIR ANTITYPES—ISRAEL'S LAST DELIVERANCE NOW DUE—GENTILE TIMES HAVE ENDED—PALESTINE SOON WILL BE POSSESSED BY ABRAHAM AND HIS NATURAL SEED UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF MESSIAH AND HIS SPIRITUAL BRIDE, THE CHURCH

"I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely."—Hosea 14:4.

Today's Study tells us of the death of Joshua, who became the leader of the Israelites at the death of Moses. He was a worthy example of faithfulness to God amongst his people. Under divine direction he divided the land of Palestine amongst the ten tribes of Israel, giving each his portion with the understanding that the portion was the gift of the Lord, and that the more faith possessed the more quickly would the tribe enter into its inheritance.

The Israelites were enjoined by the Lord through an angel, especially sent as God's representative, that they should speedily take possession of the land, driving out their enemies, destroying their idols and altars of worship, and thus conquering the entire country for themselves as God's people and ridding themselves and their children of all idolatrous temptation. But instead of doing this, they made leagues with the various heathen peoples inhabiting the land, and brought themselves into more or less of a friendly relationship. This disobedience to divine command proved to be a serious snare.

In studying the history of Israel, we are to remember that the Apostle tells us those things were allegorical. (1 Corinthians 10:11) They were true, they were real occurrences; but their chief object and purpose, from God's standpoint, was to illustrate certain great truths for spiritual Israel, coming afterwards—the Gospel church. Thus, for instance, when the Christian enters upon his new life as a result of his consecration to God, it corresponds to crossing Jordan—dying to old interests and entering into the new inheritance. Under the leadership of Jesus, our Joshua, we enter into new life full of courage and faith. Victories result.

Then we learn that the new creature is to conquer the perverted appetites of his own flesh, which correspond to the idolatrous peoples who resided in Canaan. It is the duty of the new creature to drive out these earthly hopes, ambitions, weaknesses, perversions, and oppositions to the Lord and his righteousness. If the work of exterminating were carried on thoroughly, the result would be a ripened character, strong in the Lord, full of faith, obedience, joy, peace and blessing.

However, like the Israelites of old, in too many cases the Lord's people make a truce with their own fleshly weaknesses. They fail to drive these out, and fail to overthrow the altars of passion, avarice, etc. These weaknesses and depravities of the flesh for a time cover before the new nature, entreating mercy, patience and a measure of gratification. But so surely as these are granted, the result is that the passions and weaknesses become stronger and stronger and the new creature is worsted in the battle, until he must cry to the Lord for deliverance, lest he perish before the onslaught of his own passions and desires. Thus the lives of many Christian people are a succession of battlings and defeats—captivities. The battle should have been fought out at first. The will should have been fixed firmly on the side of righteousness, truth, obedience to God.

It is difficult to determine how much all of the Lord's people suffer as a result of not being firm enough, rigorous enough, in their dealings with their own flesh, especially at the beginning of their Christian experiences. The only remedy is to cry unto the Lord as the Israelites did when they found themselves hard pressed. As the Lord delivered them, so he is willing to deliver all of his spiritual Israelites.

However, it is certainly a shame for Christians that their defeats are so numerous, as it was a shame to the Israelites that, during the period of the Judges, they were eighteen times oppressed by their enemies—slaves where they should have been masters. The one great lesson of all this to the natural Israelites and to the spiritual Israelites is the lesson of God's mercy, as expressed in our text. The Lord is very gracious, willing to forgive our trespasses and to assist us when we realize our wrong condition and appeal for help. "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely."

JOSHUA'S WISE EXHORTATION

The Book of Joshua closes with the account of his death, and the Book of Judges begins with incidents covering the same period. When Joshua realized that his work was done and that he was about to be gathered to his fathers—to sleep with his fathers in death—he called the Israelites, and reminded them of the Lord's mercies and manifest favors toward them in bringing them thus far and finally giving to each tribe the allotment of its inheritance in the Promised Land. Then he warned them respecting the dangers of the situation, the neces-

sity for being separate from the people of the land—Gentiles; otherwise the tendency might be toward idolatry. He urged upon all a full settlement of the mind, the will, on the side of the Lord and against all the heathen religions. It was then that he took his stand and announced, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve; as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." The others joined with him in the same resolve.

Our lesson tells us that all the days of Joshua, and the days of the others of the judges who outlived Joshua, things went well with the Israelites. They had the Lord's blessing and were prosperous. These leaders had in mind the Lord's wonderful dealings, and realized the importance of being on the Lord's side, if they would have his blessing. The idolatries that came in were subsequent.

The true God has always prohibited idols, while the false gods have usually been represented by idols. The idols, according to human reasoning, would appear to be an excellent way of keeping religion before the mind; but it was not God's way, and hence was not advantageous. As the Israelites noted the idolatrous worship of their neighbors, they doubtless felt that the latter were the more religious, because of this outward demonstration.

Moreover, in connection with the heathen forms of worship were various licentious practices, which to some extent would draw from curiosity and, through the weaknesses of the flesh, appeal to the Israelites. The true God, on the contrary, had instituted in their midst a worship which was pure in itself, in every way condemning sin, pointing out the necessity for its cancelation and the need for drawing near to God in the way of his appointment. In a word, the true religion appealed to the highest and noblest sentiments, while the false religions of the Canaanites appealed to the baser passions, combining a form of godliness with gratification of the flesh, dancings and various saturnalia.

But as for the Christian who condemns the Israelites very severely for wandering off, time and again, into the idolatries of his heathen neighbors and requiring to be punished of the Lord that he might turn again and seek the Lord in the right way—let such Christian remember the antitype—how forms of godliness are inclined to take the place of true heart-worship, reverence; and how the weaknesses of the flesh are inclined to assert themselves, to justify themselves and, if possible, to make themselves appear to be in accordance with the divine will. Let them remember that many today worship the golden calf more than they worship God, requiring chastisements time and again to correct them, to awaken them to their real condition. Let them remember, too, that the Christians have made idols equally as hideous as any made by the heathen—not idols of stone or wood or bronze, but more hideous misrepresentations of the divine character—our printed creeds.

Verse 17 and its connections seem to indicate that the record of our lesson covers a long period of centuries of Israel's experiences, under many judges. When they repented, the Lord raised up judges, or, as we say, deliverers, through whom their adversities would be corrected. Yet even these repeated experiences did not deeply enough impress the great lesson, so that they needed to learn their lessons over and over. When the judge would bring them back from their adversities, and they would have rest for some years during his lifetime, it was merely to fall away after his death. Nevertheless, the Lord's covenant was with the nation. The centuries since have shown the persistency of God's mercy.

GOD'S FAVOR RETURNING TO ISRAEL

As we have previously pointed out, the Bible indicates very clearly that Israel's last great lesson of oppression under the Gentiles closed in 1914. The period of chastisement, twenty-five hundred and twenty years long, began where the crown was taken from King Zedekiah, B. C. 606. (Ezekiel 21:25-27) They have not been an independent nation in all these twenty-five hundred and twenty years. As the Lord declared, Zedekiah was the last of the line of David who should reign until Messiah's kingdom would be established. The end of Gentile Times, then, marks the beginning of Messiah's kingdom. Everywhere we see manifestations that He as the great Judge is taking over the affairs of the world, and that Israel's final deliverance is at hand.

Spiritual Israel must first be delivered by the glorious "change" of the first resurrection. Thus the spiritual empire will first be established. Following that great event and the incidental time of trouble will come the exaltation of repre-

representatives of natural Israel to be the earthly exponents of the heavenly kingdom. These will be the ancient worthies of the Hebrew people—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the prophets. Others of the Hebrew people, delivered from Gentile domination, will nevertheless get their blessing through their acceptance of the kingdom arrangements, which includes the thought that their eyes of understanding will open and that they will recognize the great King.

Thus it is written that they that pierced him shall look upon him and mourn because of a realization that they crucified the Prince of Life. Nevertheless they will have a great blessing, in proportion as they have been seeking conscientiously to serve God and the principles of his righteousness. Then the Lord will pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication, in connection with which they will have so much blessing. (Zechariah 12:10) And this blessing of the Lord, coming upon Israel first, means also the blessing of all the world.

"DRINK YE ALL OF IT"

"Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?"—Matthew 20:22.

The incident which is narrated in our context occurred just previous to our Lord's death. He had gone up to Jerusalem. He had made the triumphal entry into the city. Now he was waiting for the grand climax of his experiences. He had forewarned his disciples and had explained to them that the chief priests would deliver him up to be crucified.

But the apostles in general did not understand the Lord's words. On many occasions his words had been figurative. So now they wondered what he meant. They did not know what kind of figure of speech this could be. They thought that he was near to sitting on his throne, and that they would be with him. So thoroughly were they convinced that the establishment of the kingdom was at hand that St. James and St. John—their mother acting as spokesman, advocate—had asked that when he came into his kingdom they two might sit near him, the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. They were expecting that in a day or two important events would take place which would bring them into the kingdom.

Our Lord's answer to this request was intended not only for the disciples there before him, but undoubtedly for all his disciples throughout the Gospel age, to set before them the conditions on which the kingdom was to be attained. Our Lord stated the matter very plainly, asking James and John, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They did not understand these words in full, but perceived that it meant some kind of death. "Are you able?"—Are you willing? They replied that they were.

The word able, while it contains the thought of force, strength, nevertheless expresses willingness; for it refers to the will. The thought is not, Are ye physically able?—but, Are ye mentally able? This thought would properly be represented by the word willing. Are your wills strong enough? The two disciples determined that they were. "Yes, Lord, we have a will to do the whole thing, whatever it may be." They were fully given up to the Lord, to do his will. They would be willing for anything. They had such appreciation of the kingdom, and such confidence in the Lord that whatever he was about to do they were willing to do.

OUR LORD'S REAL BAPTISM

And so it is with us. Our wills are made up. "Are ye able?" Surely! There is not a doubt—nothing to interfere. That which the disciples could not understand, and which we could not have understood had we been in their places, we fully understand now, because we have the assistance of the holy Spirit to guide and help us in the understanding of the deep things of God. We see that the Lord meant that he was immersed into death. At the beginning of his ministry, he gave us all of his earthly interests in every sense of the word. This was his sacrifice. It was symbolized by baptism into water, but it was really a baptism into death. He had been fulfilling that baptism for three and a half years; and the next day he would die, as he well knew. "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!"—Luke 12:50.

The thought is, "I am feeling greatly straitened until that baptism be accomplished. It will be accomplished tomorrow. I find that connected with that death there are difficulties that I had not expected. I am anxiously waiting for tomorrow, for the completion of my sacrificial death."

Our Lord had not supposed that his consecration to death would mean a death of such serious indignity, humiliation and misrepresentation of his character—an ignominious death. He had known that he was to be crucified, had told his disciples so and was entirely willing thus to die. But as he got down to

All who realize the fulfilment of the Times of the Gentiles should be looking for and co-operating with the further steps of the divine plan. One of these is Israel's repossession of the control of Palestine, the inheritance of Abraham and his family. The time is ripe. It remains for Jews, who by God's favor have the wealth now, to use that wealth in the furtherance of the hope of Israel. But a failure on man's part to appreciate and use opportunities will not interfere with the divine plan. The hour of blessing is coming. Through some instrumentality Palestine will shortly pass into the possession of the Jews.

Note the fact that promptly at the close of the Jewish year in September, Russia published her decree giving the Jews full religious liberty and privileges as citizens. Germany quickly followed. Great Britain also honored the Jews. Legally, therefore, the Jew today—since the close of Gentile times—is accorded the same liberties as other people. He is no longer "trodden down of the Gentiles."

the core of the matter, he saw that the arrangements were that he was to die the death of a criminal. It was an entirely different matter to be crucified as a criminal. Because he was a good man, it was most trying to him to be arrested as a blasphemer—one guilty of the worst crime known to the Jews. To be condemned on the charge of blasphemy and to be led by his own countrymen to be put to death, when he was really giving up all that he had for the service of God, was a terrible ordeal for him—much more of a test for him than it would have been for one who had been tainted with sin, and who was less sensitive because of his wrong life. Jesus seems frequently to have referred to this cup, as if He instinctively shrank from the experience.

THE CHURCH'S CUP OF EXPERIENCE

In a broad sense, the figurative expression, cup of experience, might be used in referring to every affair of our lives. But this is apparently not the way in which Jesus was using this word at this time. He used it in respect to something in the future. "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?"—in the future—that cup which I shall drink within the next few hours. That cup was a terrible draft to him—not the dying, not the cross. He had not asked that he might be spared the dying, that he might avoid death. But he had asked that this bitter cup of ignominy, that he should be put to death as a blasphemer, might be set aside; and yet he said, "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?" After he had cried out with strong cryings to God and had received the assurances of God's favor, he was then ready to drink of this cup.

So it is with the Lord's followers. It is hard that our good should be evil spoken of, that we should be declared to be poisonous to every religious sentiment. This is a part of our experience. To have people separate us from their company would be a trifling thing. To die in some respectable way would be a small matter. But to be put into a false light, to have our good made out to be evil, these are trying experiences. Our attitude is to be the same as that of our Master, "The cup that our Lord shall pour, shall we not drink it?" We have the word of the Apostle that all things shall work for good to those who love God, to the called according to his purpose. With these thoughts before our minds, we are to be of good courage and to accept the cup of experience which the Lord has for us. We know not how near that cup may be. Perhaps with the church it is the same as with himself. Perhaps there will be a measure of acknowledgment that we are right about the divine plan. Then through the machinations of the church systems we may be delivered up—possibly to death.

THE TEST NOW UPON THE CHURCH

The disciples at the first advent did not realize how near they were to the experiences of Gethsemane and Calvary. It may be so with us now, for aught we know.

It would appear as though the present time may be one in which the Lord is giving his people a test of a new kind. Even though we see the Gentile nations in process of disintegration, there is an opportunity for some to doubt the whole matter and to say, "There have been wars before, and I suppose there will be wars yet! This is not the end of the Gentile times, as I thought it would be." Such people, if they had been engaged in the Lord's service, might leave it and go into worldly society, or become engrossed in business, or what not. This is most particularly the very time in which such testings might come. Therefore we should be on our guard lest any spirit of doubt come upon us. "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

YOUR "GOOD HOPES" FOR 1915

[The plan here proposed we designate "GOOD HOPES," because nothing is actually promised—only your generous hopes expressed, based upon your future prospects as they now appear to you. The plan has proved not only so beneficial to the cause of Truth, but also so blessed to the hoppers, for some years past, that we again commend it to all as Scriptural and good. Those who desire to make use of this plan can fill out both of these memoranda. One should be kept for the refreshment of your memory; the other mail to us.]

—TO THE—

"WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY."

Dear Friends:—I have read with interest of the openings for the STUDIES and Tract work in foreign lands and here at home. I need not tell you that I am deeply interested in the spread of the Glad Tidings of the lengths and breadths, the heights and depths of redeeming love expressed for us in God's great Plan of the Ages.

I am anxious to use myself—every power, every talent, voice, time, money, influence, all—to give to others this knowledge, which has so greatly blessed, cheered and comforted my own heart and placed my feet firmly upon the Rock of Ages.

I have been considering carefully, and praying to be instructed, how to use my various talents more to my Redeemer's glory and for the service of His people—those blinded by human tradition who are, nevertheless, hungering for "the good Word of God," and those also who are naked, not having on the wedding garment of Christ's imputed righteousness, the unjustified, who stand, at best, in the filthy rags of their own righteousness. I have decided that so far as my "money talent" goes, I will follow the rule so clearly laid down for us by the great Apostle Paul (1 Cor. 16:2), and will lay aside on the first day of each week, according to my thankful appreciation of the Lord's blessings during the preceding week. Out of this fund I wish to contribute to the several parts of the Lord's work specified on the back of this letter. Of course, I cannot in advance judge or state particularly what the Lord's bounty may enable me to set apart weekly, and hence you will understand the sum indicated to be merely my conjecture or hope, based upon present prospects. I will endeavor to contribute more than I here specify; and should I not succeed in doing as well, the Lord will know my heart, and you, also, will know of my endeavors.

My only object in specifying in advance what I hope to be able to do in this cause is to enable those in charge of the work of publishing and circulating the Tracts, etc., to form estimates, lay plans, make contracts, etc., with some idea of what I will at least try to do in the exercise of this, my highly appreciated privilege.

My present judgment is that during the coming year, by self-denial and cross-bearing, I shall be able to lay aside on the first day of each week, for Home and Foreign Mission Work (to assist in circulating SCRIPTURE STUDIES in foreign languages, and in publishing the BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY in various languages, and in supplying these gratuitously to brethren who have the heart and opportunity to circulate them widely, and in meeting the expenses of brethren sent out as Lecturers to preach the Divine Plan of Salvation, and in general to be expended as the officers of the Society may deem best), the amount of.....per week.

To comply with United States Postal Laws, all or any portion of my donation may be applied as subscription price for WATCH TOWER sent to the Lord's poor or others, as the Society's officers may deem advisable.

That the work be not hindered, I will endeavor to send you what I shall have laid aside for this cause at the close of each quarter. I will secure a Bank Draft, Express Order or Postal Money Order as I may find most convenient, and will address the letter to

WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY,

BROOKLYN TABERNACLE, 13-17 HICKS ST., BROOKLYN, N. Y.,
or, London Tabernacle, Lancaster Gate W., England; or,
Flinders Building, Flinders St., Melbourne, Australia.

(Name)

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