

has called us, who also will do it," (1 Thess. 5:24)—he will do all he has promised to do, exceedingly more abundantly than we could have asked of him or expected. The whole matter is with us: if our consecration is based upon faith in the redemptive work of our Lord, if it is a full and complete consecration, and if we live it out day by day, the results will be all and more than we ever expected.

**"LET EVERYTHING BE DONE DECENTLY AND IN ORDER"**

Our lesson shows that Ezra divided the wealth contributed by the Jews throughout Babylonia and Persia and by the king amongst twelve prominent men of the Levitical tribe, strict count being kept of what each received and he being held responsible for the delivery of that amount to the properly constituted representatives of the Jews at Jerusalem. Thus our Lord, who is the Captain of our journey and who is bringing us to the heavenly kingdom, gives to every one of his followers pounds and talents for which they must ultimately give account.

In verse 28 Ezra said to these twelve men, "Ye are holy unto the Lord and the vessels are holy, and the gold and silver are a freewill offering unto God, the God of your fathers. Watch ye and keep them, until ye weigh them before the chief of the priests and the Levites and the princes of the fathers' houses of Israel at Jerusalem in the chambers of the house of the Lord." The chambers of the Temple were the little rooms of the court, separate from the Temple yet connected therewith. In these the officiating priests lived, and in them were stored the treasures belonging to the Temple and its service; they were, therefore, the safety deposit vaults of that time for the Lord's treasury.

We can see the responsibility that rested upon those men, yet still greater responsibility rests upon us who have received of the Lord's spiritual gifts and treasures, his great truth. If it was required of those men handling earthly treasures that they should be faithful and watchful, diligent, much more may this be reasonably required of us—"A charge to keep I have, a God to glorify." All of these lessons should come to us as fresh reminders of our responsibility, not for our discouragement, but reversely to make us more watchful, more careful, more zealous, more appreciative of the riches of God's grace committed to us. Those of old time were to hide their treasure, but we are commanded to show ours on every occasion—"Let your light so shine before men, that they seeing your good works may glorify your Father who is in heaven." The more we let our light shine, the brighter it will shine; the more we use and display the riches of God's grace entrusted to us, the more valuable will be our treasure and the more safe we will be, for it is a treasure which our enemies will not really covet, and our faithfulness in acknowledging the Lord in all our ways will assure us of his protection and care.

**AT THE JOURNEY'S END**

Ezra and his company, after a four months' journey, arrived safe at Jerusalem, the Lord having indeed kept them and delivered them from the marauding bands of enemies on the journey. Then it was that Ezra's real work began. He found matters at Jerusalem and throughout Judea in a much worse condition than he had anticipated, and was used of the Lord in instituting a very radical national reformation which proved a great blessing to the people, though it sifted out some of their number.

Ezra magnified the Law, showing the people how the calamities that had befallen them as a nation were all foretold in the Law and were all the result of a failure to keep the Law, and the proper course now was not only to rebuild the Temple, as they had done, but to go back to the Law and seek

to keep it inviolate to the best of their ability. He pointed to the fact that they had made unlawful unions with the tribes and nationalities surrounding them, and that the only course remaining was to separate themselves from all heathen people. This involved special trouble and trial in cases where Jews had married heathen wives, and Ezra's course would be roundly denounced by the entire civilized world today; but evidently he did the proper thing at the proper time in God's estimation, and was the divine instrument in sharply separating between the Jews and other peoples. This spirit has persisted amongst the Jews ever since, and the effect has been what the Lord desired, the keeping of that nation and people comparatively separate and distinct from all others. True, it wrought great hardship upon the wives who were put away and the children who were thus alienated, though much the same course is today prescribed by law against the Mormons, and the wives of plural marriages and bigamists.

A lesson for spiritual Israelites may be found herein, though not according to the exact letter of Ezra's teaching. The spiritual Israelite is directed by the Captain of our Salvation, through the Apostle Paul as his mouthpiece, to be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers in marriage, and to have as little as possible to do with the world in general. Nevertheless the spiritual Israelite is enjoined that if the unbelieving husband or wife remain and it be possible to live together in unity even under trying circumstances, they should do it; but if the unbelieving one depart, let him depart, consider it to be of the Lord's providence that the Israelite should be free from a vexatious alliance, though he would not be free to remarry.

**"HOW LOVE I THY LAW!"**

The call of Ezra's teaching, enforced by the word of the Lord through the Law upon the Israelites who had gotten into worldly conditions and alliances, must have been very similar to the proclamation of present truth today amongst Protestants. After having come out of Babylon to the extent of leaving Roman Catholicism, they have become involved with the world in a system which may very properly be termed Babylonish—churchianity. The Lord's people have entered worldly alliances through worldly sects and parties, contrary to the divine injunction and the spirit of the divine law, which commands us to be subject in religious matters to the Lord and to him alone. These misalliances with the daughters of Rome are so general in our day that only the Israelites indeed will have the spiritual ears to hear the message or the spiritual courage to break off the improper union, to stand out separate from all earthly alliances as the people of God, recognizing one Head of the one church whose names are written in heaven—recognizing as brethren all who are united to that one Head, and repudiating all false bodies of Christ (churches) as well as the false heads to which they are united.

This is the particular trial apparently of our day. The voice of the Lord is being sounded forth in every quarter of Christendom, saying, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen. Come out of her, my people, that ye partake not of her sins and receive not of her plagues." The churchianity of Protestantism is but a transplanting of the spirit of Babylon to new ground, and brings into bondage all those who will associate with these sects and parties; and all who would be in full accord with the Lord and have his fullest blessing must be faithful to his message and stand firm and loyal to him at any cost. To such and such alone the message of the Lord is now going forth, proving a glorious blessing and uplift, bringing them nearer to the Lord and into closer fellowship with those who are truly his and most completely under the blessing and provisions which he has made for his faithful.

## VIEWES FROM THE WATCH TOWER

### A BISHOP'S GLOOMY SURVEY

"The growth of divorces and suicides, the trying controversy with regard to the education question, and many other things, had made many people anxious as to the future of the country, not to speak of the church."

This pessimistic utterance was made at a conference of clergy and church workers at Blandford by the Bishop of Salisbury, who added that there had been revealed to them the terrible fact that a great many were giving up public worship, and that a large proportion of the people of England paid little attention to religion at all.

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The press states that when at the last convention of the "Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor" at Baltimore,

the reports were read, showing the great growth of the Society in recent years, a delegate caused consternation by inquiring why every form of evil seems to be growing proportionately more rapidly. The same question would apply to nearly all the reports of Babylon's expansion and federations.

The trouble seems to be that it is not the right kind of religion that is being promulgated and "compassing sea and land." The fear of a hell of torment has for so long been the basis of all religious effort that now, when sensible people can no longer swallow it, and when it is no longer preached in intelligent communities, there is little left as a basis for Christian life.

The public in general are ignorant of the faith and hopes set forth by the Bible; they are but "babes," and the majority

not even regenerated at all. When they discard hell torments it often means a repudiation of everything taught in the Bible which they have been misled into believing is the authority for hell, purgatory and all such errors.

The thing necessary, and at once, is to show that the eternal-torment theory, as well as purgatory, the Mass, etc., are perversions of the Bible's teachings, invented during the dark ages, by the very people who invented all the atrocious and diabolical tortures and persecutions of that time.

And next the people need to know what is meant by the kingdom of heaven everywhere referred to in the Scriptures. They need to know of the present selection of the kings and priests for that kingdom; and that it is to be set up in power and great glory at Christ's second advent; and that its mission will be the conversion of the world under the guide of its super-human rulers and instructors;—that thus in God's "due time" a knowledge of divine goodness and mercy in Christ may reach "every creature" and be made available to all.

Note in this connection the following evidence of dense ignorance on the latter point clipped from the *Pittsburgh Dispatch*:

#### "JOHN THE BAPTIST'S TEACHINGS OBSOLETE TODAY"

"Over 700 people assembled at the East Liberty Presbyterian church yesterday morning listening to an interesting sermon delivered by Rev. Dr. Ford C. Ottman of Stamford, Conn. He took for his text Matt. 24:14, 'And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.' He spoke in part as follows:

"It has been 1900 years since Jesus spoke these words. Still millions of people are living in heathenism and are liable to stay there if the present rate of progress is taken into account. If the gospel now proclaimed by Evangelical preachers is the same as the Gospel of the kingdom to which Jesus refers, then it will be impossible to say anything definite about the coming of the end. It can be shown, however, that the text has a precise application that differentiates it altogether from the message committed to the Apostle Paul.

"Christ is the Messiah, according to the official title. Isaiah said: 'Unto us a child is born,' and he did not mean any Gentile outside, but he meant a Jew. The promise given in Isaiah, that Jesus will occupy the throne of David, will never be kept, and the gospel of John the Baptist, 'Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,' is out of date. All I can preach to you is the salvation of Christ and not the Old Testament teachings. The Gospel of the kingdom is not the salvation that ought to be taught today.'"

\* \* \*

Poor man! He hesitates to rail at the Savior directly, and therefore, after quoting Jesus' words, he denounced them as misleading teachings of John the Baptist, and apparently his 700 auditors assented and considered this an "interesting" gospel sermons. How blind and deaf to the true Gospel of the kingdom.

The speaker evidently saw that the Gospel of the kingdom was what had for centuries been the "hope of Israel." He infers that it failed with fleshly Israel and has since failed with spiritual Israel. He lacks the "key" of the divine plan, viz., that God is now selecting or electing the kingdom class—the "overcomers" who shall inherit all things and sit in the throne of their Lord. And that as soon as the elect shall be all complete—having made their calling and election sure through obedience in sacrifice—then "changed," glorified with Christ, they with him shall live and reign the thousand years foretold;—binding Satan, subduing all things contrary to God and his law, and blessing and uplifting the willingly obedient of mankind—unto life everlasting as men.

But how was the kingdom "at hand" eighteen centuries ago, yet not established even now?

We reply: According to the divine program the kingdom was first offered to the natural seed of Abraham, so that had there been enough of that people "Israelites indeed"—enough to have filled the foreordained number—the invitation to joint-heirship would never have come to us Gentiles. Then there would have been no Gospel age—the Millennial kingdom would have been established directly, as it is about to be established now because the full number of the elect is almost completed.

#### SOCIALISTS IN GERMANY VERY BOLD

When Germany granted universal suffrage to her people she sought to safeguard her established laws and usages by granting extra votes to officials, property holders, etc. Yet with all this precaution against Socialism the latter has been steadily growing. The government sees this, and anticipating that at

the elections of next year the Socialists may be able to control their Congress, the "Reichstag," proposes some restriction of the present voting privileges of the masses (or their total abolition) to prevent a Socialist control.

The tone of the German Socialists for the past three years has been growing more and more mild as, under the guidance of Herr Bebel and others, they have hoped to gain their ends by peaceable means—through the ballot. Now, however, the bare suggestion of a loss of the ballot power arouses them to anger as they perceive that it would mean the extinguishment of their hopes. They are now planning for a universal strike, to be called in the event of any attempt being made to deprive them of their share in the government. This is the key to the telegram which we reprint below from the columns of the *De-troit News*.

It is not difficult to see that this means serious trouble. The Emperor and nobility of Germany, imbued from infancy with the thought that they are God's elect favorites, and that even criticism of their doings is rebellion against God, will not turn over Germany to Socialism without a bitter struggle which must in the end spell anarchy.

This illustrates what we mean when we say that Socialism is impossible in this land. We do not claim that it has no good and just proposals (as well as some bad and unjust ones). What we do emphasize is that Socialists totally delude themselves in thinking that their full program could ever be carried into general effect. They seem to think that the wealthy would permit them to vote Socialism into effect, and that all they need do is to get the public to vote their way and then legislate the rich out of their "vested rights." Not so. Watch Germany, and note that the wealthy and influential would resist to the point of anarchy.

The thought we continually seek to enforce is that the great Millennial kingdom is nigh, at our door, and that it is the world's only hope; that the Bible points that the world in its selfishness is about to wreck present institutions in anarchy within the next ten years. And that God's people should hold aloof from both sides of the struggle, and seek peace and righteousness, and love and pursue these while looking with the undimmed eye of faith to the glorious blessings of Christ's kingdom, which will be established without their swords or guns by our Immanuel.

The article referred to follows:—

#### "HERR BEBEL URGES STRIKE"

"JENA, Duchy of Saxe-Weimar.—Herr Bebel, leader of the Socialist party in the reichstag, had one of his great days in the convention of the national social democratic party today, and again showed his mastery over the members of the party. The day was devoted to a hot debate over the lengthy resolutions proposed by Herr Bebel in favor of a general strike of the working classes for political effect under given circumstances.

"Herr Bebel said he saw impending danger in the abolition of universal suffrage in the case of the election of members of the reichstag, and the aim of his resolutions was to meet such a situation with a strike *en masse*. He spoke during the entire forenoon, beginning at nine o'clock and holding the delegates and a great attendance of spectators spellbound until a recess was taken for lunch, receiving an enthusiastic demonstration at the close of his address. The sentiment in the address that called for the greatest enthusiasm was: 'We would deserve to be devoured of dogs if we were unwilling to endure hunger for several weeks in behalf of human rights.'

"The discussion at the afternoon session brought out sharp opposition to Herr Bebel's resolutions from leaders of the labor unions and from several important Socialist members of the reichstag, who regretted what they called 'a relapse into revolutionism,' as it was calculated to strengthen that element in German politics which advocated ruthless methods in dealing with the laboring classes.

"Herr Rosa of Luxemburg, who is famous in the party for his vitriolic eloquence, made the speech of the afternoon. He said it would be a shame if the social democracy should have any anxiety about 'disenthraling the proletarian masses in the glorious year of the Russian revolution.'

"Herr Bebel, in summing up the debate, said he had attended every Socialist convention that had been held, but never had he heard such a threatening tone as that used during the present convention. The speeches, he said, were ghastly with talk of blood and revolution.

"Only 14 votes were cast against Herr Bebel's resolutions to strike."

## THE GLASGOW CONVENTION

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

There seemed to be a general expectation that this Convention would, in one respect, at least, be like all its predecessors. So far each Convention has been better than those before it, and the one just past has conformed to the rule. Former occasions have been sweet and precious as we have met to talk over the good things the Lord is providing, but as we approach the end of the journey, with a wider experience of the love of God, and a clearer understanding of the great call with which we are favored, the joy deepens and the fellowship becomes more and more a foretaste of the good to come. It is only a few short years since the first of this series of meetings was held in Glasgow: then there was a small company in a small room. The truth was hardly known in the city, but the few upon whom it had laid hold, whose hearts were touched, worked hard in the use of their opportunities, and some of the results were apparent as the Glasgow brethren made their visitors welcome. The number of those needing sleeping accommodation was about 180, and of these 140 or more were placed with the home brethren. The average attendance at the meetings would be about 400, while the largest meeting was said to about double that number.

The chief topics of the talks that were given by the brethren who addressed the meetings may be said to be the "kingdom of heaven." Much was said about its constitution, the time of establishment, our present responsibility towards its interests, and, last but not least, how we must prepare ourselves for a place in the kingdom. One brother urged that as the kingdom is to be given to the "saints," only those who charge themselves with its present interests will be proved worthy of a place in it. To each comes responsibility, and all can do something. Our Master did not say, "Stir yourselves for great work in the time of harvest." Instead he left us the responsibility of the harvest work by saying, "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into the vineyard." If all may not enter upon active work, at least all can pray, and thus prove the interest is there.

The brethren appreciated having Brother McPhail at the Convention, and all appreciated your kind thought in prolonging his stay for it. The friends had learned to love him, and to esteem his ministry, and were glad to have the opportunity of seeing and hearing him again before his departure for the States. The loving harmony of the meetings and the peaceful and happy looks of the brethren made a great impression upon

some who attended. We hope they will seek and find the same peace in the one Lord. We heard of many weak ones who were confirmed in "this way," and we know of one dear brother who came with troubled heart, and lost his troubles in consecration to the Lord. May he ever find the rest of the people of God.

On Sunday there were thirty-three brothers and sisters immersed, in this manner showing their consecration. One was an elderly brother who for a time refused to listen, but who now rejoices in the truth. Another was a dear lad of 16 years, one of three brothers who attend the Glasgow meeting. We trust for these, as we do for all, that the Lord's grace may comfort and strengthen them all the way, whether longer or shorter. The elder brother just spoken of told us of an unusual experience. He was at the railway station in a pondering mood, for he wanted some DAWNS and had come to the end of his immediate resources. Standing wondering whether or not he should ask a sister for some books on credit, he was accosted by a man with whom he had a slight acquaintance, but with whom he had not spoken for ten months or more. "How are you for money just now?" said the friend. "Well, I'm not exactly 'flush,'" was the reply. Without further words £5 was placed in the brother's hands with the remark that nothing was wished back, and the friend immediately boarded an outgoing train. The brother at once went away to get the books he wanted for his friends, paid for them and left some change for the Tract Fund.

Many of the friends went away on the Monday night, but before the Convention proper was closed a message of love was sent to yourself. It is probable that you will get this from one of the local brethren, but in any case the message will not spoil by being sent twice. The message is Philemon 6, 7, and Hebrews 13:20, 21, and it was with heartfelt love that the brethren testified to this. Some stayed until Tuesday night, when the final meeting was held, and at which a good number were present. Many who had come long distances went away by the late night trains. A good number went to the stations to see them away, and it was good to see the laughing joy, even though there were wet eyes. On the Tuesday morning about forty brethren said a final good-bye to Brother McPhail, and wished him "God-speed," and also a quick return, if that should be the Lord's will. But we all want to see you again, dear brother. Come soon!

With much love in the Lord, I am, as ever, your brother  
in Him,  
J. HEMERY.

## EFFECTUAL FERVENT PRAYER

NEHEMIAH 1:1-11.—NOVEMBER 19.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."—Jas. 5:16.

Nehemiah was a young Jew of one of the prominent families of the Babylonian captivity. He occupied a confidential position with Artaxerxes, the Persian king, somewhat similar to the office held by Mordecai under King Xerxes (Ahasuerus), the father of Artaxerxes. His official title, "cupbearer," does not give the proper conception of the dignity of his position. In those days kings needed to be continually guarded against poisons, which could be easily mingled without detection with their liquid refreshments. Consequently the cupbearer was one whose loyalty was esteemed irreproachable, and his duties afforded him privileges and opportunities for intimate intercourse with the king more than others. They became confidants of royalty and court advisers, really occupying the position of Minister of State.

Though possessed of wealth and enjoying the king's favor, and in every way advantaged so far as this world's affairs were concerned, Nehemiah's heart was not surfeited with his earthly blessings and privileges, comforts and advantages. His brother had been amongst those who went up to Jerusalem with Ezra, as narrated in our last lesson. That expedition had been partially successful and partly a failure. Ezra had heroically drawn the line of demarcation between Jews and others. The walls of the city had been repaired in a fashion, but their enemies had been angered by what they no doubt considered the arrogance of the Jews in considering themselves separate and distinct from other peoples, refusing to intermarry with them. The sending back to their homes of all foreign wives under Ezra's direction capped the climax of what they considered to be injury done to them. These enemies had spitefully attacked the city, broken its walls and burned its gates, and the people of Jerusalem, comparatively few in number, weary and exhausted, had not the energy to rebuild and repair. Moreover, they feared to do so lest their enemies would deal harshly with them.

It was through his brother, who returned, that Nehemiah gained information respecting the deplorable condition of affairs

at Jerusalem. The news made him heartsick, for he not only had the usual patriotism, but, as a Jew and as a believer in the divine threatenings and promises, he had an intensity of love for the land of promise, a burning desire to lend his assistance in every manner for the recovery of the Lord's people and their re-establishment in power as the Lord had promised.

### IMPORTUNITY IN PRAYER

Our lesson relates chiefly to Nehemiah's prayer to the Lord after he had heard of the conditions in Judea—his prayer for the Lord's blessing and assistance, to the intent that the good promises of the Lord respecting his holy city and land might be fulfilled. Nehemiah does not give us the words of all his prayers, for we learn from other parts of the narrative that he prayed after this manner for four months before he began to have an answer. What we read, therefore, is supposed to be a general outline of the sentiments which he expressed in various forms at different times, praying without ceasing during those four months. Of course during all this time he attended to his duties, but this prayer was always in his heart, the sentiment of his mind, and more or less associated with all his thoughts and plans and arrangements.

So it should be with all of the Lord's people of spiritual Israel. The things which we have only a slight desire for we may mention once or twice at the throne of grace, but those things which lie very close to our hearts become our continual prayer, associating in our minds with all of life's duties and interests, the heart gravitating continually toward the thing we have desired of the Lord, and on suitable opportunities repeating to him the request—making sure that the thing we request is in accord with his promises. This is the kind of praying which the Lord commended, saying, "Men ought always to pray and not to faint"—that the Lord's people ought to continue asking for the right things with some degree of persistency, and should not grow weary, hopeless, faithless, faint in their hearts.

**ANSWERS LONG DELAYED**

Doubtless there are many reasons why the Lord does not promptly grant such of our requests as are in accordance with his will, in harmony with his Word. We may not know all of these reasons, but some of them are apparent. Undoubtedly one reason for the Lord's delay in answering us often is to test the strength and depths of our desires for the good things that we request of him. For instance, he informs us that he is more willing to give his holy Spirit to us who ask than are earthly parents to give good things to their children: yet the giving of his holy Spirit is a gradual process, and we are enabled to receive it only in proportion as we are emptied of the worldly or selfish spirit. It requires time to thus become emptied of self and prepared for the mind of Christ—in some it requires longer for this than in others, but all need emptying in order to receive the refilling. He that seeketh findeth, but the more he seeketh the more he findeth; to him that knocketh it shall be opened, but his continual knocking and his increasing interest in the knocking means his increasing desire to enter, so that as the door of privilege, of opportunity, swings slowly open before him his courage and strength increase as he seeks to avail himself of the opening, and thus every way the blessing is greater than if the Lord were to answer the petitions more hastily.

Whenever we think of prayer and answers thereto we should remember our Lord's words, "If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye may ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." (John 15:7) Ah, there are conditions in this statement. Those who abide in Christ must have gotten into him by faith, repentance and consecration, and to abide in him means that the faith will abide, the repentance for sin and opposition to it will abide, and the consecration to the Lord and his service will abide and be manifest.

The other condition also is a weighty one: "if my Word abide in you." Ah, how evident it is that the Lord meant to associate himself and his Word, the Scriptures, in the minds, in the hearts, in the lives, in the prayers of all who are truly his. We must search the Scriptures to know the will of the Lord, to know what he has promised and what he has not promised, to know what we may ask and what we may not ask for, and ascertaining these, the fully consecrated one will not want to be, to have or to do anything except that which will be pleasing to the Lord in respect to him—"Thy will, not mine be done, O Lord," is his prayer. And when this position has been reached we can readily see that whatever would be asked by one thus well informed respecting the divine promises and fully submissive to the divine will, would be things which God would be well pleased to grant in answer to his requests.

We are to think of our heavenly Father as rich and benevolent, kind and generous, yet wise as well as loving. We are to suppose that he will have pleasure in giving us the desires of our hearts if those desires are in harmony with his plan, which plan he has already framed on such lines as to include our very highest and best interests and the highest and best interests of all his creatures. So, then,

"Faith can firmly trust him,  
Come what may."

And his well-informed children can have all the desires of their hearts because their hearts are in full accord with the Lord, and they desire nothing of the Lord except the good things of his purpose and promise.

**NEHEMIAH'S FASTING AND PRAYER**

The substance of the prayers of Nehemiah is stated: "I beseech thee, O Jehovah, God of heaven, the great and terrible God that keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments." Thus praying, he had before his mind the testimonies of God's Word respecting his dealings with Moses and the prophets and the kings of the past. He did not reproach the Lord as having failed with his part of the covenant, but, quite to the contrary, acknowledged that the Lord's ways and dealings with Israel had been just and true, and that the difficulties in which they were involved as a nation were the just penalties due them for their violations of the covenant made at Sinai. He expressed confidence also that the Lord would keep his covenant and have mercy upon the people, or upon those at least who would seek to walk in his paths.

He entreated, "Let thine ear now be attentive and thine eyes open that thou mayst hearken unto the prayer of thy servant which I pray before thee now day and night for the children of Israel, thy servants, while I confess the sins of the children of Israel, thy servants, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned." No proper prayer can be offered to the great Creator that does not acknowledge in some manner the weaknesses, deficiency, imperfection, sin of those who approach the throne of grace. As the Apostle declares, even we who are new creatures in Christ ap-

proach the throne of heavenly grace to find mercy and grace to help in every time of need. But our boldness, our courage, is not that of self-confidence, but of confidence in him who loved us and who bought us with his precious blood—in him who died for our sins and under whose covering robe we have peace, forgiveness, harmony with God.

O, how much this means to us! More than it could have meant to Nehemiah or others living before the great atonement sacrifice had been made. It is our privilege to see how God can be just and yet be the justified of him who believes on Jesus. We see that by the grace of God, Jesus Christ has tasted death for every man, and that ultimately the merit of his sacrifice will be made applicable to every man through the Lord's own channels and agents.

Nehemiah was very open in his confession, and we believe that such an attitude is the proper one for all who would approach the Lord. Sins and weaknesses should be confessed to the Lord, however they may be reasonably screened from the eyes of others while we are seeking to do our best in walking not after the flesh but after the spirit. He says, "We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, neither the statutes, nor the judgments which thou hast commanded thy servant Moses. Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress I will scatter you abroad among the nations: but if you turn unto me and keep my commandments and do them, though your outcasts were in the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence and will bring them into this place that I have chosen to set my name there. Now these are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand."

**"BELOVED FOR THE FATHERS' SAKE"**

This prayer, mentioning the Lord's threatenings and acknowledging the justice of them, and acknowledging also the transgressions and the infliction of the penalties, and this turning to the Lord's promises for forgiveness and mercy and reconciliation, exhibit the very proprieties of prayer which all should imitate—Jew or Gentile. The "Israelite indeed" who transgresses the divine precepts and is chastened of the Lord can plead the Lord's promise to be very merciful to those who are of a contrite heart, and ask forgiveness based upon the great redemption sacrifice, and may by faith accept the divine promise immediately and enter into rest of soul so soon as he shall have done all in his power to rectify the wrong bemoaned.

The Lord did respond to Nehemiah's prayer by granting him the opportunity for being associated in the rebuilding of the city and the placing of it upon a more satisfactory and permanent foundation, but it was not God's time for fulfilling all the gracious promises that he had made to that nation. It was not for Nehemiah to know the mysteries of the divine plan as they entwined in all the affairs of the Jewish nation and held them together as a separated people for several hundred years until Messiah was sent unto them to gather to himself the Israelites indeed in whom there was no guile, and to reject, to blind, to give over to be scattered amongst the nations the remainder of the Jewish people. Because it was not time to reveal the divine plan in all its details, therefore the Lord, in hearing Nehemiah's prayer, merely granted him the privileges and blessings and opportunities possible for him at the time, leaving the larger fulfillments of that prayer and all the prayers for Israel to the glorious consummation when the glorified Christ, the antitype of Moses, shall stand forth to gather into one all nations under his own headship.

The Apostle Paul had in mind the still greater scattering of Israel amongst all nations of the world, accomplished at the beginning of this Gospel age by the utter destruction of Jerusalem, from which it has not yet recovered. To the Apostle it was given to understand and appreciate the matter, and to explain to us who are of the spiritual Israel that he who scattered Israel was the Lord, who also would regather that people in his own due time. The Apostle points out to us most explicitly that all the history of this nation was known to the Lord, including the scattering in fulfillment of our Lord's Word, "Your house is left unto you desolate." It was in view of this greater scattering that the Apostle, full of faith in the promises of the Lord's Word, speaking under inspiration, assures us that "the gifts and callings of God are not matters of repentance"—that God never gave nor promised things ill-advisedly, that he knew the end from the beginning, and that ultimately every promise would be graciously fulfilled. He explains to us that the casting off of natural Israel was the appropriate thing during the period that God was gathering spiritual Israel to be the bride, the Lamb's wife, joint-heirs with Christ. He assures us that as soon as the church has all been selected, tested, proven, glorified, then divine favor will return to nat-



ural Israel, and he says, "They shall obtain mercy through your mercy"—fleshly Israel shall obtain mercy through the glorified spiritual Israel.

#### THE RECONCILING OF THE WORLD

What a wonderful plan! All for which Nehemiah prayed will be much more than fulfilled, not because the heavenly Father has changed his plan to suit the prayer, but because in his prayer Nehemiah asked in accordance with the Lord's plan, yet did not ask as much as God has purposed to accomplish. The finite mind cannot grasp the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine provision. Consequently the Lord is about to do for natural Israel exceedingly and abundantly more than we or Nehemiah could have asked or could have thought. He is about to gather them out of every nation, people, kindred and tongue, and to reestablish their judges and law-givers as at first, only that these judges and law-givers of the future will be perfect, and, more than this, under the direct instruction and guidance of the then glorified Christ—head and body.

Doubtless it was because it would have been beyond the comprehension of the Jews that the Lord did not make very plain in all his prophecies that the blessings proposed for fleshly Israel were the same blessings which later would be bestowed upon all nations, peoples, kindreds and tongues. As he veiled the fact that there would be a spiritual Israel, as well as a natural Israel, so he veiled in the promises the fact that in the future all the nations, peoples and tongues will have an opportunity of becoming Israelites indeed, children of Abraham. These gracious promises are indeed clear when we attain a proper viewpoint in respect to the divine Word, though hidden from any other standpoint. For instance, we now see the meaning of the Lord's word, "I have constituted thee a father of many nations" (Gen. 17:4); and again the promise, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:3); and again the Apostle's assurance that as the rejection of natural Israel meant the acceptance of spiritual Israel to the higher and chief elements of the promise, so the regathering of spiritual Israel would mean life from the dead to all humanity.—Rom. 11.

#### PRAYING TO THE POINT

Nehemiah's prayers were to a point, namely, that he might have a special blessing from the Lord upon himself and upon the mission which he believed the Lord would be willing to put into his hand through the authority and coöperation of the king Artaxerxes. His prayer was, "O, Lord, I beseech thee let now thine ear be attentive to thy servant and to the prayer of thy servants [all true Israelites], who delight to fear thy name: And prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day and grant him mercy in the sight of this man." As we have already seen, the monarchs of those days were absolute in authority, and their ill will might very easily be aroused by any plans and arrangements or suggestions which might strike them as inimical to their own hopes, aims, ambitions and prospects. Nehemiah might well doubt that the king would take favorably to the suggestion that he be permitted to go to Jerusalem to endeavor to establish law and order there and to help along his own kindred. The king might very properly view this as disloyalty. If he were a loyal servant and appreciated his position in the king's confidence and his home in the capital city, why should he wish to leave these and go elsewhere to reestablish a nation and capital which had once been competitors in the race for world power. The king in his anger might order his execution, or cast a javelin at him.

Nehemiah's prayer to the Lord that he might grant him mercy in the sight of Artaxerxes shows that he had faith in the divine power. We have often wondered if a deficiency of faith along such lines is not a part of much of the trouble of the Lord's truly consecrated people today—of spiritual Israel. We know that sometimes they have severe trials from those who hate them, from those who perhaps despise them and deal unjustly with them, and we wonder to what extent they remember, as Nehemiah did, that God has full power to open ways and means before us whereby we may engage in his service, if he be willing to accept of our services, if we find favor in his sight, if our prayers of lips and of heart go up before him as a memorial, acceptable through Christ.

#### PRAYER AND TRUST IN ALL AFFAIRS

We remember in this connection a story told us by a sister at one of the Conventions. She said: "My husband is quite wealthy, has a large farm, well stocked, etc., and, although I have served faithfully for years, he is so opposed to the Truth, and so seeks to hinder me in respect to it that he begrudges me even the small sum of the WATCH TOWER subscription or the price of books I need. When I heard of this Convention I felt a longing in my heart to go and meet with some of the

Lord's dear people, and I took the matter to the Lord in prayer, telling him that if it were his pleasure I should greatly enjoy the privilege of attending the Convention, but I was willing to leave the matter entirely with him. I felt somehow that it would be quite probable that the Lord would open the way for me to go, and by way of coöperation I suggested the matter to my husband in good time, saying that I would like very much to attend the Convention. He was violently opposed, and said that the distance to the railroad station was so great that I could not walk it, and that he would not allow me to use a horse. I replied quite calmly that I did not know, but somehow I felt that the Lord would be willing to have me go and would perhaps open the way yet for me. I answered quietly, because I had committed the matter entirely to the Lord, and was willing to abide by whatever his providence might mete out to me. I was even cheerful, therefore, notwithstanding my husband's words of opposition. He seemed to read my confident expectation and several times referred to the matter, reiterating that I should not go, that he would not allow me to take a horse, etc. I merely replied that I did not know, but that if it were the Lord's will that I should go, he would be able to open the way. About ten days before the Convention one of my husband's best horses took sick, and although he is very successful in doctoring his stock, and on this occasion called in a veterinary surgeon, the horse died. Then another good horse took sick and it died, and a third horse took sick. My husband began to realize that it might be the hand of the Lord in his affairs, and evidently associated his losses with his declaration that I might not use a horse to go to the Convention. He brought up the subject of the Convention himself, intimating in a very mild way a possibility of rescinding his previous decision. My quiet answer was the same, that perhaps the Lord would open the way. The third horse died, and my husband came to me and said, 'You may go to the Convention.'

#### WE WALK BY FAITH, NOT BY SIGHT

In relating these circumstances we do not wish to give the intimation that the Lord would thus deal in every such case. We must remember that a part of our lesson as the Lord's followers is that we must learn to walk in the footsteps of Jesus trustfully—by faith and not by sight; that we must learn patient endurance, and thus develop more and more all the fruits and graces of the spirit of love. Our object in referring to this case is that all of the Lord's people may have the suggestions which it offers, in harmony with those of Nehemiah's prayer, namely, that God is able to shape all our earthly affairs for us, and that a part of our lesson is to learn to trust him. He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but with the temptation will also provide a way of escape. He does indeed permit us to be tried as gold in the furnace, yet as gold is not permitted to be consumed in the furnace, so the Lord will not permit us to receive injury under any conditions so long as we are trusting in him. All things must work together for good to them that love God, to the called ones according to his purpose.

As Nehemiah's prayer was delayed of an answer four months, and no door of opportunity seemed to offer for him to bring the matter to the king's attention, so with us—patient endurance and faith may be amongst the lessons which the Lord wishes us to learn by the delay in the answers to our petitions. Likewise, doubtless, that four months of delay was used by the Lord in more or less a preparation of the king for coöperating with the request of Nehemiah. And so with us it may be that, while we are praying, the Lord is not only preparing us for the blessing and opportunity and privilege we desire, but also preparing the circumstances and conditions which will bring us these opportunities and privileges in the best form. Let us, then, lay to heart and utilize the lessons of our Master's words, "Men ought always to pray and not to faint."—Luke 18:1.

"The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," says our Golden Text. The prayers of the unrighteous, we understand, will avail nothing; and in this connection we are to remember that "there is none righteous, no, not one," and that all the righteousness which we have or which permits us to present ourselves before the Father, or which guarantees us that we shall be heard of him, is the righteousness of Christ imputed to us—the merit of his sacrifice covers all our blemishes. Let us remember, too, that it is the fervent prayer that is the effectual one—the prayer that is earnest, from the heart and not merely from the lips. It is for this reason that self-denial, fasting and praying should be associated in the minds, and in fact we should be so earnest, so fervently desire the things that we request, and be so confident that they are the Lord's will, as guaranteed by the promises of his Word, that

we would hold on and wait for the mercies the Lord thus prepares us to receive.

It would be rather unsafe, we think, for any of the "new creation" to make request for temporal blessings. "After all those things do the Gentiles seek." (Matt. 6:32) They seek those things because they know not of and appreciate not the higher and better, the spiritual things. Spiritual Israelites are exhorted by the Lord to appreciate the spiritual clothing, the spiritual food, the heavenly riches, which moth and rust cannot corrupt, and to seek for these.

The Master tells us what we may freely ask, what we may be assured that the heavenly Father will be very willing to grant to us, though he bear long with us, though he give it grad-

ually to us, and not perhaps as rapidly and as fully as we request it. His words are: "If ye, then, know how to give good gifts [earthly gifts] unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him." (Luke 11:13) The holy Spirit is the spirit of love—to God and to man. It cannot be given to us under present conditions except gradually, as the old selfish, wrong spirit is deposed from our hearts. This, therefore, must be continually our prayer to the end of life's journey, that we might be filled with the spirit of the Lord, and thus praying means that we will be thus laboring day by day, and that the Lord will continually bless us, giving us the fruits of his spirit in our hearts and in our lives more and more, its joy and peace and blessing.

## IN THE GARDEN OF THE LORD

Last night I dreamed the Master came to me and gently said, "Beloved, lay thy cross aside and come with me awhile, For I would have thee rest within the garden of the Lord." And then he took my trembling hand and led me through the gloom

Until we came to where a massive gateway barred our path. The gates were closed, but opened at the Master's sweet command.

We entered, and the shadows fled before his radiant smile. Oh, vision rapturous, can words be found to tell how fair! Ten thousand roses beckoned with Love's crimson hue, and round

About our feet the violets nestled in their purple grief. A passion flower, sad symbol of his dying agony, Entwined itself with orchids rare, fair children of the air; While velvet pansies, clothed in royalty, together grew With lovely, clinging, pink and white sweetpeas, and close beside The lilies of the valley bent in sweet humility; And everywhere the tender grass—a carpet soft and cool.

And often as we passed, the Master's hand with loving touch Did rest upon some drooping flower, and lo! at once it seemed Refreshed. At last we came to where a stately lily stood, Its snowy crown uplifted like a chime of silver bells, Whose swaying filled the garden with a fragrance sweet and rare.

We closer drew, and then I saw, alas! how here and there A petal fair was torn and brown, as though by some rude wind Or scorching heat. I wondered greatly at the sight, then turned, The question on my lips,—when suddenly there rose a storm

So fierce that every flower in the garden bent its head; And then a shower of flaming arrows, hurled by shadowy forms Outside the garden's ivy-covered walls, rained down upon The lilies, while I clung in terror to my heavenly Guide. A moment only did the storm prevail, and then I heard The Master's "Peace, be still!" The tempest ceased and there was calm,

The wondrous light grew dim, the garden vanished,—and I woke.

The Master had not spoken thus, and yet I seemed to know The fair dream-garden was a picture of his "little ones," (He neither sleeps nor slumbers in his watch-care over these). And then the thought,—if in this garden I might choose my place,

Would I be like the rose? Ah, no! lest in my passionate zeal To show by works my heart of love, I should forget the thorns, Dear Lord, and wound thy loving hand! Ah, then, perhaps I would

The lily be, and sound thy blessed truth o'er land and sea In clear-toned eloquence. Ah! no, I might not bear the storms That beat upon the one whose head thou hast uplifted far Above his fellows,—and a shining mark for Satan's darts! And thus I thought on each and all that garden's lovely ones, Then cried, "My blessed Lord, if I might choose, oh, let me be The tender grass, that I may rest and soothe thy weariness,— A lowly place, safe sheltered from the wind and fiery dart,— What rapture this—to lay down life itself beneath thy feet."

—G. W. Seibert, Sept. 30, 1905.

## ABSTINENCE FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS

1 CORINTHIANS 10:23-33.—NOVEMBER 26.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."—1 Cor. 10:12.

By common consent this date is recognized as Temperance Sunday throughout the civilized world. No true child of God could feel indifferent in respect to a matter of such vital importance to our race. Undoubtedly the drinking habit is a cause of much of the woe of the world, and hence whoever is on the Lord's side, however is striving as one of the royal priesthood to remember the injunction, "Be clean, ye that bear the vessels of the Lord's house," must feel his responsibility to this question in respect to his own person and the example of his daily life upon others. Whoever realizes that the whole creation is groaning and travailling in pain together and longs for the time to come when he may, in association with his Redeemer, roll back from the world the weaknesses of heredity and bind Satan and estop the course of sin and temptation, such an one, truly, heartily and sympathetically entering into these hopes set before us in the Gospel, will surely be in sympathy with every reasonable and legitimate means used in opposition to the great drink evil, which, as a brood of fiery serpents, is biting the world of mankind and causing all kinds of trouble, mental, moral and physical.

Were there no more important work for the saints to do undoubtedly it would be the will of the Lord that we should engage our talents largely in combating this terrible drink evil. But while seeing still more important work for the Lord's ambassadors to engage in, it is eminently proper that we should let it be known on suitable occasions that our sympathies are with those who are fighting in a legitimate manner this hideous monster, and that our non-participation is not from lack of sympathy with the cause, but because, from our standpoint of view, there is a still greater, still grander and still more important work to be done in the proclamation of the good tidings of reconciliation to those who have an ear to hear our message now and ultimately to all the families of the earth. We trust that every one who has by the grace of God learned

of present truth, and whose conceptions of divine mercy have been enlarged through a grander view of the divine plan, feels an increasing opposition to everything and every influence working in the world contrary to righteousness, purity, truth, and tending to further degrade our sadly fallen race. The clearer our view of the divine plan the more intense should be our feeling of opposition to everything sinful and contrary to that plan. The more we appreciate our God and are consecrated to his cause, the more we must be opposed to the adversary of souls and opposed to everything which is injurious to our fellows.

### THE SCOPE OF THIS STUDY

We are glad that those entrusted with the arrangement of these International Bible Lessons have chosen an apostolic exhortation which is applicable to temperance in every proper sense of the word. It is applicable not only to food and drink and clothing, but to every interest and affair of life; even as the Lord's people, consecrated to do his will, are exhorted that whether they eat or drink or whatever they do all should be done to the glory of the Lord. We have the declaration that no drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of heaven, and we assume that intemperance on other lines would equally prove in the Lord's sight a lack of proper character on our part that would bar us from a share in the kingdom, and that therefore with equal propriety we might say, No glutton shall enter the kingdom of heaven. Neither those who devote their lives to fashion and folly, dress and frivolity.

The Lord is seeking for the kingdom class persons of character, and has arranged that those who hear his message of grace in the present time and are accepted of him through consecration shall sacrifice their own wills, the will of the flesh, to do the Lord's will, and therefore to no longer surrender themselves to gluttony or drunkenness or fashionable folly. The Lord is seeking those who surrender themselves to

him to be taught in the school of Christ, to there learn the lessons of self-control, self-denial, patience, humility, meekness, and come to a proper appreciation of the various graces of the holy Spirit, and so far as possible to live in harmony with their noble conceptions and desires. These are the ones whom the Lord is seeking for the kingdom, and we may feel sure that he will accept no others. He will find a sufficient number of this kind to complete his predestination, and it is for us, if we have heard his voice and been accepted of him, to strive daily to be dead to the world and to all fleshly desires that we may thus make our calling and election sure.

#### THE LAW GOVERNING SAINTS

The Apostle says that all things are lawful for him, but all things are not expedient. There is a limited and unlimited way of using language. Evidently the Apostle has no thought of using this expression, "all things," unlimitedly. It would not have been lawful for him to murder or steal or do other things which he recognized to be contrary to the divine will. He is discussing the proper liberties of Christians. Their one law is supreme love for God and consequently a love for all mankind. This comprehensive law is binding upon them—it is the law of their being, to disregard which would mean the loss of the holy Spirit and, persevered in, would mean the second death. The Lord's children are not governed by "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not," in respect to all the little affairs of life. It is left to them to apply the principles of this law of love to life's general affairs, including its trivialities. The Jews were under laws respecting various little details, and the Gentiles, the heathen, had their customs, usages, laws. The Christian stands free from all those, bound only by the one law of love. He may do anything that would not conflict with that law, but many things that would not so conflict might be inexpedient, inadvisable, because of the mental and moral condition of those about him who might misunderstand his course.

In this lesson the Apostle is explaining a difficulty which perhaps more than any other trivial question was troublesome to the early church. The apostles at the Council in Jerusalem, answering the inquiry of the church at Antioch, had declared that the Jewish law did not affect the Gentiles who had accepted Christ. Nevertheless they urged upon them amongst other things that they abstain from meats offered to idols. (Acts 21:25) This proved to be a very difficult matter with them because of the customs of that day. In Corinth, for instance, nearly all the meats sold in the butchers' stalls ("shambles") was meat which had been offered to idols. The people, not knowing the true God, in exercising their faculty of veneration had come to suppose that all meats should be first offered to the heathen idols, in order that the partaking of them might have a blessing and be to their health. Meat of any other kind was scarce. The Apostle explains in our lesson that if Christians were invited to a feast by some of their unbelieving neighbors or friends or relatives, as for instance a marriage supper, they would in all probability sit down to meat which had been offered to an idol. They were in perplexity in respect to the matter what they should do: the Apostle was endeavoring to make plain to them the path of duty.

#### UNDER THE LAW OF LOVE

He sets forth, first of all, the basic rule that we who are Christians, we who are truly consecrated to the Lord, have given up our own wills and preferences in every matter with a view to honoring the Lord and doing all the good we can in the world in his name. He urges therefore, "Let no man seek his own but every man another's welfare." (v. 24) The Apostle here would seem to mean that we are to be entirely regardless in respect to our own welfare that we may accomplish all the good possible for others; yet we believe that we would not be doing violence to the general tenor of the Scriptures to suppose the Apostle means that we are not to seek our own welfare *merely*, but are to keep in view also the welfare, the interests of others, so that where these would conflict we would be ready to make any reasonable and proper sacrifice, especially on any matter or subject which would relate to the Lord and his Gospel message, because we are God's ambassadors and representatives of the truth, his message, in the world.

In view of these things the Apostle advises that those who are advanced enough in the knowledge of the truth to appreciate the fact that an idol is nothing, and that the offering of meat to that idol would in no degree affect it, might properly enough use their liberties and eat the meat, asking no questions, but remembering that "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof;" and, accepting the food as being a part of the Lord's bounty, they may give thanks for it and eat it, regardless of where it has been, whether offered to an idol or not. But if some one should say to the believer, "That meat you are about to eat was offered to an idol," giving the inference that he

believed it would be sin to partake of it, then our course should be different: not because our own conscience would smite us with the thought it was sin, nor with the thought that the meat had been injured by laying it before a piece of wood or stone, but for the conscience of the one telling us, lest he should think we were committing a sin, and lest he should be thus lead to think lightly of our professions or to similarly partake, and that in violation of his own conscience—he thinking it to be sinful to eat such meat.

The Apostle Paul was thus in some degree stepping beyond the decree of the council at Jerusalem; but while standing up for all that the Jerusalem council, had advocated, in so far as it would have any bearing or influence upon others, he nevertheless would recognize the liberty of the people of God, that they are under no law except love. He therefore is in this Scripture endeavoring to show wherein the law of love would have its restraining influence along the lines of this question of eating meat offered to idols. The Golden Rule of love would bid us be careful not to stumble the conscience of others, but otherwise it would not restrain us, for as the Apostle says, "Why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?" (1 Cor. 10:29) If it is not my own conscience which reproves me why need I put myself under bondage in the matter if it in no wise affect the interests or conscience of another? It is in harmony with the use of this liberty that the Apostle has just suggested that the one discerning his liberty may eat food respecting which he may have his suspicions that it was offered to an idol, and ask no questions about it, so that no one's else conscience may be involved; but if the conscience of another were involved the Golden Rule would immediately operate, and forbid us doing anything which would stumble or injure the conscience of a brother and break our good influence over him.

#### THE OTHER EXTREME

In a very few instances we have heard of people who endeavored to use the Apostle's argument here to restrain others from their reasonable liberties on various subjects. They put a false interpretation upon the Apostle's words, saying to the brother, "You ought not to do that because I do not want you to do it," or "The Apostle says that you ought not to stumble your brother, and you are stumbling me by not going to church with me, as I wish you to do and as I think you ought to do."

This is a total mistake, a misapplication of the Apostle's teaching. It is an attempt to shackle and lead him as a slave, using the Apostle's words as a chain of slavery. If a Methodist brother should think that I ought to go with him to meeting on Sunday, a Presbyterian brother or a Lutheran brother or a Baptist or an Episcopalian or a Roman Catholic might each equally think that I should go to their services; yet none of these brothers could or would attempt to claim that the Lord had directed me to go to his particular services, nor could he claim that not to go with him would be a violation of any moral principle. The wrong in such a case would be done by the one who would seek to bring the brother into bondage, and would use the Apostle's arguments in a sophistical manner contrary to their true import and contrary to the Golden Rule, for he would be doing to his neighbor contrary to what he would wish the neighbor to do him—he would be attempting to reenslave his proper Christian liberties.

#### PARALLEL QUESTIONS TODAY

On the contrary, we have two matters in our day which closely parallel this difficulty in the church in the Apostle's day, namely, the temperance question and the Sabbath question. The laws of civilized States usually provide for abstention from labor on one day of the week, and Christian people in general suppose that God has particularly required this of Christians—that it is a divine law, a bondage upon them. As we have already shown,\* this is an erroneous view; nevertheless Christians are glad of the opportunity to observe one day in seven for special worship and thankfulness and spiritual feasting. And seeing the general though erroneous view that believers have, it becomes not only our duty, but love makes it a pleasure and a privilege, to carefully abstain from any labors upon that day which the general sentiment of our neighbors would consider to be a violation of the sacredness of the day. Love for them and a desire not to encourage them to violate their consciences, not less than love for the Truth and a desire to have them appreciate the Gospel of which we are the ministers and ambassadors, should lead us to great carefulness on this matter.

The liquor question occupies a similar position in the minds of many. True, there is nothing in the Word of God which prohibits his people from using all the liquors that would do them good, but the majority of the Lord's people are well

\* MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. VI, chap. 8.

aware that they would be better without any, and hence that to use liquors in any measure or degree would be to abuse their own persons, and to more or less incapacitate themselves for the service of the Lord and to do good unto all men according to opportunity in his name. But even if we might use liquors *ad libitum* without injury, there would be under present conditions and sentiments strong reason why we should avoid every appearance of evil in respect to intoxicating liquors. We realize more and more what a curse it is to the world, and that our influence, if thrown on that side of the question, might ensnare others, who perhaps would be less strong to resist the encroachments and injuries from this demon. We can realize that under present conditions in this land it would be a reflection against us, against the message which we bear, against the Lord whom we represent, to have anything to do with the liquor traffic, or even to enter a liquor saloon on any other business, or to associate ourselves in any manner with so dire an evil, which even the unregenerate realizes to be an enemy to righteousness in every sense of the word. Some of the Lord's people, we feel, are not as particular as they should be in estimating the weight of their influence, and in determining that by the Lord's grace, as the Apostle urges, they will do nothing against the truth, but will do all in their power for the truth—for righteousness.—2 Cor. 13:8.

#### THE BREADTH OF PAUL'S ARGUMENT

All must agree that the Apostle's argument is sound. On the one hand everything that we receive is a gift from the Lord, and anything that we can render him thanks for would be proper for us to use in a becoming manner, and none would have a right to condemn us for so doing. None should speak evil of us for doing a thing that we can do with good conscience and with prayer and thankfulness. On the other hand, however, while they have no right to criticize us, we have the right to judge our own conduct and to restrain ourselves, and to determine, as the Apostle elsewhere explains it, that if eating a certain kind of food would cause the stumbling of others, we would gladly agree never to use that kind of food. We are to see our liberties and to use them according to our judgment of the Lord's will, because all things are given us richly to enjoy (1 Tim. 6:17) Eating or drinking, whatsoever we do, do all to the glory of God.

But whenever we see that anything in our lives, however right it may be of itself, would be a hindrance to the spread of the Lord's cause, a dishonor to the truth in the sight of others, it is for us to sacrifice that thing, to deny ourselves that right, that liberty, that privilege, and give no occasion of stumbling either to Jew or Gentile or to the church of God.

#### PAUL'S PERSONAL EXAMPLE

Blessed is every teacher who can write, as the Apostle does here (v. 33), that his own personal course known to the people of God is in full accord with the teachings he has set before them respecting self-denial for the good of others—"even as I also please all men in all things, not seeking mine own advan-

tage, but the good of the many, that they may be saved." What a noble character was St. Paul's! How willing to lay down his life for the brethren! yea, and in the hope of turning some from being aliens and strangers to make of them brethren through the message of the grace of God. Let us all more and more cultivate the Apostle's spirit and willingness to be and to do anything or everything that the Lord may be glorified and his cause advanced, and that his people and all people may be blessed. This is the spirit of Christ, the spirit of self-sacrifice, the spirit of love, the spirit of a sound mind to seek to do others good at any cost.

We are not to understand the Apostle here to mean that he succeeded in pleasing all men, for we know that he was stoned, beaten, and finally suffered death because he did not please all men; but he was loyal to the Lord, which loyalty meant the disapprobation of men. The Apostle's meaning evidently is that he sought, so far as loyalty to the Lord was concerned and loyalty to the principles of righteousness, to do or be everything for the advancement of the Gospel and the blessing of the people.

#### "HIM THAT THINKETH HE STANDETH"

Our Golden Text appeals to us forcefully in connection with this lesson. The Lord's people are sometimes in danger through not realizing their own weaknesses. The Apostle said, "When I am weak, then am I strong." (2 Cor. 12:10) His paradox signifies that when he realized his own weakness, then through this realization he was led to rely upon the Lord and the power of his might, and thus was stronger than he could otherwise have been, strong in the Lord and not in his own strength. This principle is still applicable to us. The moment when we feel self-confident is the dangerous one; the times when we feel our own weakness and are looking to the Lord for grace and help and guidance and strength, this is the time that by reason of his assistance we are strong.

Let us take heed, then, lest we feel over-confident in respect to our own strength, our own standing on these questions of liberties, rights, privileges and self-denials for the good of others. It is right that we should think that we stand, but it is right that we continually appreciate that we stand not in our own strength but in the strength that God supplies through his promises and through his holy Spirit. We are frequently exhorted in the Scriptures not only to rejoice in the Lord and to trust in his power, but to fear and take heed lest we should in any measure slip away from a fail to rightly improve our positions and privileges. On a par with our Golden Text is the Apostle's statement, "Let us fear lest the promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it." (Heb. 4:1) Love is the test to which all of the Lord's disciples are subject. Love considers the interests of others and seeketh not her own interests; love is willing to sacrifice for the good of others and for the glory of the Lord and for the advancement of his cause. Let love, therefore, abound in our hearts more and more.

## CONCERNING ONE-DAY CONVENTIONS

#### AT HARRISBURG, PA., ON OCTOBER 8

We had a grand season of refreshing, friends attending from various surrounding towns. The morning rally brought our excellent testimonies of love for the truth and loyalty in its service.

The afternoon service for the public was held in Chamber of Commerce Auditorium and was well attended—about 600 being present. The topic, "To Hell and Back. Who are there? Hope for the deliverance of many," was received with close attention for two hours by people not accustomed to sit longer than twenty minutes for a sermon. The evening topic addressed to the interested was, "Yom Kippur, the Sin Atonement or Covering." In this we showed that Oct. 9, the Jewish Atonement Day, was but a type of the greater one, its anti-type—the Gospel age. We need not give details of this, for many of our readers got in the *Pittsburgh Dispatch* a good report on the day following. A midnight train brought us home for Monday's duties and privileges.

#### AT PROVIDENCE, R. I., OCTOBER 22

This was a rousing Convention. About 300 attended from outside the city, full of love and zeal and animation. Of these about 25 came from New York, about 100 from Boston, 50 more from cities near Boston, and 50 others scattering from various points.

The morning testimony rally was full of enthusiasm and the joys of the inner life shone brightly in all faces and was testified by many lips.

The friends here had advertised with still greater energy

and wisdom than on the occasion of our previous visit. They had placed 580 large cards in store windows and on the fronts of cars, and in addition had circulated 20,000 smaller cards thoroughly in the city homes. As a result Infantry Hall, the largest in Providence, was crowded, and some were turned away, unable to secure admittance. Of the 2,000 gaining entrance nearly 300 stood for the two hours of the discourse on "To Hell and Back." We learn that one of the audience, asking for a WATCH TOWER on "Hell" said, "I entered this hall an infidel. I am, thank God, leaving it a firm believer in the Bible as God's Word."

The evening session for the interested was not advertised, but between 400 and 500 were present. Our discourse many of you received in the *Pittsburgh Dispatch* of Oct. 23. Its theme was, "Christ the center of the divine revelation."

#### AT SCRANTON, PA., OCT. 23

The Scranton friends, noting that we would be unable to reach Allegheny from Providence in one night, urged that we give them one meeting on the homeward route. We assented cheerfully. We arrived at 2 p. m., were met at the depot by five of the elders and soon were at the hall, where handshakes and greetings told us that the Scranton friends were still filled with the spirit of love, joy and peace as before and in accord with the Lord's jewels everywhere. Word had gotten out to the friends residing in surrounding villages and cities, and some of these were present, among them some but a few weeks old in the truth.

En route to the hall one of the elders remarked, "We have



been endeavoring to follow your advice in the DAWNS, Brother Russell, to put to work all of the brethren giving evidence of ability, and as a result we now have quite a few able to lead Bible studies, to give Chart talks and to deliver occasional addresses. Following your advice further, we have all realized that the field is a broad as well as a ripe one, and have been going out here and there, all of us, as the Lord seemed to show an open door for the truth. As a result the truth is making progress here, to our joy and, we trust, to the Lord's pleasement. How many of these outside meetings do you sup-

pose we are keeping up?" We guessed 14; but the reply was, "More than that—25." We congratulated them, and again commend this plan to all.

A good audience listened for two hours to a discourse on the topic the friends had advertised—"To Hell and Back," etc. Then more hand grasps and "God bless you's" and we were off for the train, accompanied by about a dozen. A special luncheon was thrust into our hands as we left for Allegheny, where we arrived at 7:45 on Tuesday morning.

## SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED

### CONCERNING TOBACCO

**Question.**—Is it wrong to grow tobacco?

**Answer.**—The growing of tobacco is on a par with the selling or using it. It is not forbidden in the Bible and is contrary to no human law. It is not, therefore, a question of conscience, except where found injurious to health. Nevertheless, we feel a repugnance to the use of tobacco, with its chewing and spitting and abominable odor upon the breath and the clothing. We believe that Christians as they grow in *grace* desire to be clean every whit—outside and inside, and to give as little offense to others as possible. Such we generally find preferring other business, other food and other habits. We commend this course, wherever reasonable and possible, as being in line with what we believe would have the Lord's approval. But it is not a question of conscience, but of expediency, and each must decide for himself, and often according to circumstances beyond his reasonable control.

### SHOULD WE VOTE?

**Question.**—Should the Lord's people vote? Would it be wrong? or would it be a duty?

**Answer.**—Conscience may have to do with this question on either side. And conscience never should be violated. It may be educated, however; nay, it is our duty to educate conscience, and God's Word is its best instructor. The spirit of God's Word is to the effect that the elect are a "new creation," whose "citizenship is in heaven," and all of whose interests, temporal and spiritual, center in "Thy kingdom come." Assuredly we must have dealings with the world to earn our living decently, but all of this class should be on the alert to foster the interests of the new creature, and experience proves that the less we have to do with the "world" and its politics the better will be our spiritual health. What will our votes amount to anyway? Even if we all voted the one ticket we would change no election. Our advice then is that as nothing is to be gained and much time and spiritual energy sure to be lost by dabbling in politics, the consecrated will be exercising the spirit of a sound mind in the wisdom from above in leaving the world's affairs to its own care. See further DAWN Vol. I, chaps. 13 and 14; also Vol. VI, pp. 593, 594.

### PRAYING FOR PHYSICAL HEALING

**Question.**—Why might we not pray for physical healing if we felt sure we could thereby be of greater service in the Harvest work?

**Answer.**—We need to analyze our thoughts, and to remember that they are deceitful above all things; that they sometimes endeavor to cheat us as to their real motives. It seems to us that the craving which we all would have for physical healing is considerably of a piece with a desire we all would have to see some miracle performed—a desire to walk by sight and not wholly by faith. On the other hand, to our understanding the Lord's wish is that we of the Gospel age shall walk by faith and not at all by sight. Hence the signs were permitted in the beginning of the age, for the establishment of the church, and were subsequently dropped that the church, established by the Word of the Lord in its hands, should walk by faith entirely. Another thought which might assist the craving for miracles of healing would be the relief from pain but this would be in the nature of a selfish wish also; and if the Lord should relieve from pain it would be one step toward relief from disease, and if disease were eradicated why not also pray for relief from homeliness, crooked heads, bad dispositions, etc? In a word, why not ask the Lord to make us over again? But this, as will be perceived, would be restitution, which is not a part of the divine order now, but God's arrangement for the next age. The object, as we have seen, of the calling of the church in this age is to sacrifice, and we are to re-

member also that it is not the new creature that is sacrificed, but the old creature—the new creature is renewed day by day. The Lord heals all its diseases; that is to say, he coöperates with us for the healing of spiritual defects, and promises a completion of the work in the resurrection of the spiritual body. This is what we get in exchange for the surrender of earthly rights of restitution. We should be glad indeed that, coming to the Lord and being justified by faith, our poor old bodies, already almost dead, will be permitted to go down into death and the matter reckoned a complete sacrifice, whereas it is only a fragment. If, on the contrary, we were restored to physical perfection, it would mean that we would have a great deal more to sacrifice before we could possibly expect to die. Hence it is more favorable to us that the Lord reckons our bodies perfect and then sacrificed, because we have that much the less sacrificial service to perform, yet counted of him as complete sacrifice.

### RELATIONSHIP OF THE "HEAD" TO THE "BODY"

**Question.**—The subject of our relationship with Christ, he as the Head, we the members of his body, is not clear to me. How could the Lord be Head over a body which was not in existence when he was glorified? How can the feet exist in the world without the remainder of the body likewise?

**Answer.**—To the natural mind, uninstructed from the standpoint of the Scriptures, it would seem inconsistent to say that Jesus, the Head of the body, was glorified before any members of his body had even been called; but when we view the matter from the Scriptural standpoint we see that this is the very thought presented, and it is the essence of wisdom, therefore, to accept the divine statement and to harmonize our natural reasons therewith. Similarly the entire church, from our Lord's day to the present time, is counted as the one body of Christ—which body we are, the living stones, being polished and fitted and prepared for the glorious Temple, not yet completed. As represented in MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. I., in the Chart of the Ages, this union between Christ and the church is a perpetual one throughout this age, the lines of the Head being preserved in the church which is the body of Christ, as the lines of the small pyramid are preserved in the lower parts of the same. From this standpoint it is entirely consistent to speak of the living members of the church as being the "feet class," as it is consistent to speak of our Lord at his first advent as being the Head of a body not then even called. There are many Scriptures, when you come to study the subject, which speak of the last members of the church as "the feet of him." "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth."—See DAWN, Vol. II, pp. 141, 142.

It is in this day in which we are living that the "feet" are in special danger of stumbling, as stated in Psa. 91:7.—See DAWN, Vol. III., p. 241.

There are two views which may properly be taken respecting the members of the body of Christ. One views them chronologically from Head to feet, as also the seven churches of Rev. 1-3. The other view recognizes the church at any particular point of time as a complete church, having in it the representatives of the various functions of the entire body, as described by the Apostle in 1 Corinthians 12. In this latter view some of the members of the body of Christ at the first advent were more important members, representing the quality of eye, ear or tongue, hands, etc., while other members represented less important functions of feet, legs, etc., as the Apostle explains, and this has been true of the church in any and every stage of its existence, and is true today. But these two separate views of the matter should not be confused nor made to conflict with each other.

We seek, not, Lord, for tongues of flame,  
Or healing virtue's mystic aid;  
But power thy gospel to proclaim—  
The balm for wounds that sin hath made.

Breathe on us, Lord; thy radiance pour  
On all the wonders of the page  
Where hidden lies the heavenly lore  
That blessed our youth and guides our age.

[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 proved not only so beneficial to the cause of truth, but also so blessed to the helpers, 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 *Dawn* 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 Millennial Dawn in foreign languages, and in publishing the "Old Theology Tracts" 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 "Pilgrims" 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 or O. T. Tracts 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,

"Bible House," Allegheny, Pa.

(Name) .....

(Post Office) ..... (State) .....

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## WATCH TOWER SUBSCRIPTIONS

—ON GOOD HOPES ACCOUNT—

The friends who contribute to the "Good Hopes" (described on the reverse of this sheet) at times desire to send the *Watch Tower* to friends who are not yet interested enough to subscribe for themselves; or to deeply interested friends who are too poor to subscribe and backward about accepting our *Lord's Poor* offer. They are invited to give us such addresses below—the expense to be deducted from their donations. Give full addresses, and write very plainly please, mentioning the length of the subscriptions.

[illegible]

## CHRISTIAN HOME EMBELLISHMENTS

For several years we have been supplying our readers with handsome text and motto cards for the walls of their homes. Their influence is excellent; for they continually and cheerfully catch the eye and remind the heart of our great favors present and to come, based upon the exceeding great and precious promises of our Father's Word. We commend these as *helps* in the "narrow way,"—*helps* in character-building.

We have laid in a large supply of very choice mottoes this year and expect to be able to fill all orders promptly. Late orders last year we were unable to supply.

We have for your convenience put these up in four assortments at \$1.00 per package, including postage. We also have a 50c assortment of the smaller sized mottoes. If you get any of these you will be pleased; but if you have already had some, mention when and how many, that we may send you different ones now.

# OLD THEOLOGY TRACTS

These are published quarterly, copies being sent to all subscribers. Other copies, for distribution among friends, from house to house, for enclosure in letters, and in general for use in such ways as seem judicious, are supplied freely, the expense entailed by the great demand for them being borne by the Tract Fund of voluntary contributions. Write for the tracts as you feel able to use them, even if not so well able to contribute toward the expense; some who are not able, and do contribute, do not have opportunities personally to use all that their contributions pay for, so that the matter is equalized and all may have a part in this service of disseminating the truth.

## A PRIVILEGE AND A SERVICE

We are convinced that the *Watch Tower* lists do not contain the names of one-half of those deeply interested in its teachings. The total is small enough surely, and we are not content that the names of any should be missing. We believe that all such will be stimulated and encouraged on the "narrow way" by its semi-monthly appearance on their table, reminding them afresh of spiritual matters which the world, the flesh and the devil continually tend to crowd out of mind and heart.

Hitherto we have required that all desiring the *Watch Tower* on credit, or free, as "the Lord's Poor," should make *personal* application; but now we request every subscriber to inquire among those whom he *knows* to be interested in present truth, and to obtain the *consent* of all such to send in their subscriptions either on *credit* or *free*, as their circumstances may necessitate. Any getting it on credit may at any future time request that the debt be cancelled, and we will cheerfully comply. We desire that as nearly as possible the *Watch Tower* lists shall represent all those deeply interested in its message.

Our object is not the gain of "filthy lucre," but "the perfecting of the saints for the work of ministry"—present and to come. (Eph. 4:12) We offer no premiums, desiring the co-operation of such only as appreciate the privilege of being co-workers with us in this ministry. Our list is now about 22,000; but it should be at least 30,000, and we confidently expect the above program to bring it to that figure. Let as many as appreciate it as a privilege, join at once in this service.

## WATCH TOWER SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS

Most of our subscriptions end with the year, so we take this opportunity to remark that we will be glad to hear *promptly* from such as desire the visits of the *Watch Tower* continued. This applies to all who get it on the Lord's Poor list as well as to those who pay. When names are dropped and afterward renewed it makes us unnecessary trouble.