

INTERESTING QUESTIONS

CAN ANY OF THE GREAT COMPANY BE OF THE RESTITUTION CLASS?

Question.—Can any of the great company become members of the restitution class?

Answer.—We understand that the terms under which any are begotten of the holy Spirit are that they renounce, give up, the human nature. When God accepts their consecration and takes such into covenant relationship with himself, he indicates that relationship by begetting them of the holy Spirit. The only class into which these can come for future life is that of spirit or heavenly beings. If they live up to all the terms and conditions of their sacrifice, then they will have the very fullest blessing which God has provided for the loyal and to which he has called them. But for those who fail to live up to the highest standard—that of walking in the footsteps of Jesus—the arrangement seems to be that they shall at least prove themselves loyal, even if not to the same degree as their brethren.

This loyalty will be tested in the great time of trouble through which the great company will go. Then if they fail to prove their loyalty, apparently they will lose that life in the second death. But if they give up the earthly life and manifest loyalty to the Lord, even though they may never give it up willingly, but merely when brought to straits, then they will have life on the spirit plane.

The merit of Christ, which has been under embargo, as it were, must all be released before the restitution work can begin. In other words, the little flock must have been “changed” and the great company must have suffered destruction of the flesh, before the merit can again be free in the hands of Justice, ready to be given to the world in restitution.

Therefore, our answer would be, We cannot expect the Spirit-begotten ones to pass through the time of trouble in the end of

this age and to live on during the Millennial age; for they belong to the church of the first-born, all of whom must be born before the after-borns can be brought forth. The after-born will be the world in the restitution.

FIFTH SUNDAY CONVENTIONS

Question.—Are Fifth Sunday conventions advantageous?

Answer.—We are perplexed how to answer this question, and must leave the answering of it to each class for itself, without any particular advice even. From some we have heard good reports with blessings secured. From others we have reports to the contrary. Those who have had practical experience with these conventions should decide for themselves. We have had no experience in this direction.

HOW TREAT “THE MENACE”

Question.—How should the WATCH TOWER readers treat “The Menace?”

Answer.—This is a free country and everyone has a right to follow that course which he believes will be most to the Lord’s glory and most to the advancement and the good of his fellow-men. The Editor of “The Menace” is merely exercising his rights. As for the WATCH TOWER, it pursues a different course without criticising others. Perhaps the Lord may have a work for “The Menace” for all we know. Our judgment is that his work for us is in a different direction and we exhort all the WATCH TOWER readers to reserve all their might and physical strength for the promulgation of the truth as the Lord has been granting us to see it within the last forty years in the WATCH TOWER. It is our mission to preach the Word—the Gospel of the kingdom. We cannot do all that we would in this direction, and hence have no time to devote to other matters, political, social, etc.

TRULY BEAUTIFUL

Beautiful hands are they that do
The work of the noble, good and true,
Busy for them the long day through;
Beautiful faces—they that wear

The light of a pleasing spirit there,
It matters little if dark or fair;
And truly beautiful in God’s sight,
Are the precious souls who love the right.

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LOVE NOT THE WORLD

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.” 1 John 2:15.

In the text, “Love not the world,” we do not understand the term “world” to mean either the human race or the planet on which we live. The thought of the text seems to be more particularly the present order of things, for the Greek word here translated world is *kosmos*, signifying arrangement. We are to appreciate the beauties of nature. We are to love the human family, whom God also loves, though not in the sense in which he loves the church of Christ. We read, “God so loved the world that he gave his Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”—John 3:16.

St. John cannot therefore be understood to refer to the world of mankind, when he says, “Love not the world.” For them we should have sympathy similar to that which the Heavenly Father has for the fallen race. The Scriptures inform us that the present order, or arrangement, of things on earth is entirely out of harmony with God’s will, or purpose; for the world is ruled by selfishness. The divine arrangement is that love shall be the rule among God’s creatures. “God is love. . . . He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God.”—1 John 4:8, 16.

The world operates along lines different from those of love. Each one strives selfishly to heap together treasure for himself, even if meantime his neighbor goes destitute. Many live in luxury, while realizing that there are others who lack the necessities of life. Many seek for power to control men, not with the thought of their uplift, but with a view to using them for selfish ends and motives. This spirit of selfishness belongs to the present order of things. We see it in operation everywhere.

The spirit of the world lays hold of all the forces of nature and seeks to control these, to adapt them to its own selfish interests. It is true that much good has resulted indirectly from this spirit of selfishness. For instance, a man with a great amount of the vain-glorious spirit may for his own selfish purposes benefit others. A general might have so much pride in his service that in order to win praise for himself

he would care for his soldiers and have them well dressed. Some of our great captains of industry have done the world good service, and incidentally have blessed many, while carrying out their own designs.

SELFISHNESS THE SPIRIT OF THE WORLD

If all of the great worldly enterprises were undertaken with a view to the betterment of mankind, the spirit of these would not be selfish. We know, indeed, that much is done to help those who are needy, and that where there is a motive of this kind, it is often misinterpreted and misjudged to be selfish. But “the Lord looketh on the heart.” (1 Sam. 16:7) Those who have the selfish heart, the selfish intentions, will continue to love the things of the world. In proportion as such may be shown that there is a new order of affairs coming, in that proportion the selfish-minded will not be in sympathy with the change of dispensation.

If a man conducts a large enterprise for the benefit of those who would have opportunity to share such blessings, that man would rejoice that there is a better time coming. A man who would truly rejoice to have a better arrangement of affairs, would not have the spirit that dominates in the present order of things. He would have the Spirit of God, the Spirit of love, the spirit that will dominate the new order of things, that will control during the thousand years of Christ’s reign.

Many are in the attitude of mind which would say, “My employer is rich. Whenever I get the opportunity to help myself to some of his money, I will do so and get as much as possible.” Such people love the present order of things, whether they be rich or poor. A great many poor love the things of this world, and hope some day to get their share.

There are people who say, “Oh, I do not love the world and its selfish spirit! From the crown of my head to the soles of my feet I am opposed to it. Sometimes I say to my husband, ‘This is a very selfish world, John.’ Then he replies, ‘Yes, Mary, it is. Everywhere people are seeking for everything that will gratify self and selfish desires. But while

you condemn the ways of the world, yet you delight in the good things of life provided by my industry—the automobile, the pleasant home, etc.’ And I must acknowledge that he is right. I fear that I could not be happy without them.” Such a person certainly loves the things of the world, even while making good use of them.

It seems to be a serious charge to say that any one who is in that attitude of mind which loves the world and the things belonging to it, has not the love of the Father in him. We do not understand, however, that such a one has no love for the Father or that the Father has no love for him. The Apostle seems to be addressing this message to the church. Those who have been adopted into God’s family must continue to love him or they would not be counted as members of that class.

What, then, is the full import of this expression—“The love of the Father is not in him”? To us it would mean that the love of the Father had not gotten full control of his heart, and this would mean that ultimately—unless he should gain a victory over his selfish disposition—he would not be accepted as a son.

Everywhere about us is this spirit of selfishness. Every child of God should be on guard against it and against willingness to participate in the things of this world. We should strive to be in that condition which is pleasing to the Father. We are to try to rid ourselves of the spirit of the world and to be filled with the Spirit of the Father. This would not mean that we are not to appreciate beautiful things, or that we are not to like to see others striving to benefit the world; but that we should not be satisfied with any of these things, so far as we are concerned.

TWO KINDS OF MOTIVES

Whatever talents we possess we should use for the good of humanity in any kind of work that would be for the glory of God. Even a good work could be engaged in from the spirit of the world rather than from the Spirit of God; that is, it might be done for what we could get from others in the way of money, honor or influence; or, on the other hand,

it might be for the good we desired to do for others.

The highest of all services is that of the ministry of the Word of God. Even this noble service might be pursued from either of two motives—the love of the Father or the love of self. Apparently there are some engaged in the ministry purely for the sake of the loaves and fishes, for the honorable position it gives them in the world, or because they do not know of anything that would serve them better.

Again, there are those, no doubt, who have entered the ministry, not for selfish reasons, but because they desire to serve God, to serve the truth, to serve his people. The Lord alone knows what has induced any one to enter the ministry. But since we are living in the day that will try every man’s work, God will prove what sort it is—will show what motive is behind the deed.

Those who are serving merely from the worldly spirit will be vexed with everything that is making for truth; and in proportion as their earthly interests suffer, they will be angry. Those who are of the right spirit, however, will rejoice in everything that will be helpful to humanity, in everything that is to the glory of God, in everything that will make the Bible more easily understood.

In fact, we may suppose that the real testing, so far as the church is concerned, is the making manifest whether we love the world—the things of the present time—or whether we love God supremely. As time goes on, it will be even more impossible to harmonize the spirit of love and the spirit of selfishness. Those who love God will be fully out of harmony with the spirit of the present evil world.

“Love not the world!

He in whose heart the love
Of vanity has found a place, shuts out
The enduring world above.

“Love not the world!

However fair it seem;
Who loveth this vain world—the love of God
Abideth not in him.”

THE RETRIBUTIVE CHARACTER OF DIVINE LAW

[This article was a reprint of that published in issue of June 1, 1894, which please see.]

THE CREATION OF THINGS MUNDANE

JANUARY 5—GENESIS 1:1-31; 2:1-3.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was waste and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep.”—Gen. 1:1, 2. (R. V.)

In the past, Bible students have not been sufficiently critical in studying God’s Word. Today’s lesson illustrates this. The Genesis account does not begin with the creation of the physical earth, as was once supposed. “The beginning” refers merely to the work accomplished by divine power in bringing the waste and lifeless earth into condition for man’s use.

The earth was already in existence, and had been created by divine power before the time mentioned in the Genesis account. Read our text several times until this is clearly seen. Higher Critics (would go back millions of years to) discuss various theories respecting how the mass of earth was formed, and they attribute millions of years to this. Bible students may well content themselves with the record that the earth already was at “the beginning,” of the Genesis account.

The Bible mentions days of various lengths; for instance, “the day of temptation in the wilderness”—forty years (Heb. 3:8, 9); “A day with the Lord is as a thousand years” (2 Pet. 3:8); our Lord’s “day,” etc. (John 8:56) While God could have accomplished the great work of ordering the earth in six 24-hour days, or in six minutes, for that matter, there is no reason to think that such short days are meant.

God arranged a great week of seven days for his great work of bringing man to perfection. Six of these days prepared our planet to receive Adam as its lord and earthly king, an image of his Creator. The seventh day, which there began, is not yet completed—it lacks a thousand years of completion. During that period, the Bible tells us, earth will be brought to a Paradise condition and man will be restored by his Redeemer to God’s image.

Six great thousand-year periods or days have passed since Adam was created, according to Bible chronology. We are now in the dawning of the great seventh day or Sabbath day

of human experience. God has promised that this seventh day of a thousand years will be very different from the preceding six days, in which mankind has experienced a reign of sin and death. The seventh day of a thousand years is Scripturally called the “Day of Christ,” and by many it is styled the Millennium. In it Satan and sin are to be overthrown, righteousness is to be established by the Redeemer, and mankind, purchased by the precious blood at Calvary are all to have full opportunity for arising from present degradation to re-attainment of the image and likeness of God, lost in Eden by Adam’s disobedience.

The seventh day of the creative week began with Adam’s creation and has already lasted six thousand years, and is to be completed with the thousand years of Christ’s Reign. The seventh creative day will be seven thousand years long. Whoever sees this to be a reasonable deduction can easily suppose that the six preceding days of the Genesis account were, likewise, seven thousand years each. Reckoned thus, the total period from the time that divine energy began to operate upon the waste earth down to the time when the whole work of creation and restitution will be fully completed, would be 7 times 7,000 years, or 49,000 years.

According to the Bible, that time will be a thousand years hence, when The Christ shall have accomplished his work for mankind to the full and shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father. At that moment the fiftieth thousand-year period will begin, with every creature in heaven and on earth ascribing praise to him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, forever. How appropriate this will be, especially when we recall that in God’s arrangement fifty is the greatest climax of numbers! In Bible usage the number seven is symbolical of perfection, and 7 times 7 represents a completeness of perfection; and the fiftieth or Jubilee following is climacteric.

"LET THERE BE LIGHT"

We hold that the Genesis account is in full accord with all the facts known to science. There was no light in the earth prior to the time when divine energy brooded on the surface of the waters. The account seems to suggest an electrical influence, and a light somewhat resembling the Aurora Borealis. The earth was dark because shrouded with an impenetrable fog and an upper canopy of water, mineral water, etc. This thoroughly shut out the light of the sun, moon and stars, which did not shine in upon the earth in any sense until the fourth day. The Jewish day, patterned after the Genesis account, began with the night. So the first day of 7,000 years, under the divine energy, gradually increased this electrical light and prepared for the next epoch.

The work of the second day, or epoch, was the establishment of a firmament, separating between the waters of the sky and the waters of the earth. Doubtless the light had to do in a natural way with bringing about this secondary feature of the earth's preparation. The establishment of the firmament began very slowly, but was completed with the end of the second day.

In the third day, or epoch, under divine direction earthquakes took place, mountain ranges were thrown up, and thus the waters of the earth were gathered into seas, draining off a land surface in preparation for vegetation. Forthwith vegetation sprang up—grass, bushes, trees, with their seeds and fruits. The account does not say that God made so many different kinds of grasses and fruit, trees, etc. It declares that under divine command the earth brought forth these various kinds. Nothing in the Genesis account would interfere with an evolutionary theory as respects vegetation. Thus, under divine supervision, the third day accomplished its purpose.

According to the Vailian Theory the earth was once surrounded by rings and belts similar to those of Saturn and Jupiter, consisting of minerals and waters thrown off to a great distance when the earth long previously was in a molten state. These rings, attracted to the earth, approached her gradually, one by one. Held off by the firmament, they spread out like a great curtain, causing much of the darkness. Then, influenced by the motion of the earth on her axis, they gravitated toward the poles, gradually becoming heavier. Finally they broke, one after the other, coming down as great deluges, burying vegetation, which later became coal beds, and deposit-

ing minerals of various kinds which man has since been using.

Each successive deluge added minerals to the crust of the earth and water to the seas, the weight of the seas creating further upheavals of mountains, etc. The last of these rings came down as a deluge in Noah's day. Previously, for centuries, it had been a great watery canopy. Through it the sun, moon and stars were visible, but not clear, as now. Under these conditions there were no storms, nor was there any rain. (Gen. 2:3) The entire earth under this canopy was like a greenhouse of equable temperature. This accounts for the vegetable and animal remains found near the poles, and long imbedded in ice, which formed instantly when the canopy collapsed as a deluge.

With the fall of several of earth's "rings," the atmosphere became translucent, so that the luminaries of the sky could exercise their beneficial influences in respect to animal life about to be created. These luminaries have served mankind as a great clock, marking days, months and years. Thus the work of the fourth epoch-day was accomplished.

On the fifth day the waters began to swarm with living, moving creatures. Next came fowl and great sea monsters. Here again a measure of evolution is suggested by the statement that "the waters brought forth abundantly" the various kinds, under divine supervision. Only in the case of man does the Bible distinctly declare a personal creation.

The creation of land animals marks the sixth epoch-day. Fish and fowl took precedence, as scientists agree. Again we read that "the earth brought forth," but we also read that the Lord directed the matter in the development of the different kinds or varieties.

It was at the very end of the sixth day that God created man. The earth did not bring him forth. He was created in his Maker's character-likeness, to be the king of earth, to have dominion over the creatures of the land, the air and the sea. Another account seems to imply that Mother Eve was taken from Father Adam's side, to be a helpmate on his own plane, in the beginning of the seventh day, for this was the last feature of creation. We read that God finished his work on the seventh day and rested. He has rested or ceased from his creative work during this seventh day, leaving the finishing touches to be accomplished by the Redeemer during his Messianic kingdom, which will complete the seventh day—49,000 years from the time God said, "Let there be light."

"GOD CREATED MAN IN HIS OWN IMAGE"

JANUARY 12—GENESIS 1:26—2:25; PSALM 8.

How different the statement respecting man's creation from that describing the creation of plants and the lower animals which the seas and the earth brought forth! Man's creation was premeditated. In advance, God designed man to be the king over the earth, having dominion over fish and fowl and beasts, even as his Creator has the supreme dominion of the universe. He was to be his Creator's image, not in physical form, but in moral and intellectual qualities. He was not to be of the divine nature, but of human nature—a fleshly being resembling his Creator, a spirit being. This intention of Deity was fully carried out in man's creation. As we read, "God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." Not a word here can be construed as in any sense implying the evolution of man from the lower creatures.

A FALL, NOT AN EVOLUTION

So far from teaching an evolution, the Bible teaches the very reverse, both in the Old and in the New Testament. St. Paul declares, By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world, and death as the result of sin. Thus death passed upon all men, because all are sinners. (Romans 5:12) The Prophet David refers to his fallen condition and queries respecting God's mercy in providing for a man a redemption and restoration to divine favor, saying, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" (Psalm 8:4) He then proceeds briefly to picture man's glorious condition before he fell, saying, "Thou madest him a little lower than the angels. Thou crownedest him with glory and honor and didst set him over the works of thy hands." Later he describes man's dominion as related to beasts of the field, fowl of the air and fish of the sea.

In a word, the Bible represents man as the crowning masterpiece of mundane creation. The seal of God's Word is set to this in the statement that God pronounced him "very good." This is also implied in the statement that God created him in his image, for the Scriptures declare, "All his work

is perfect." Nor could we for a moment esteem it just or right that any but a perfect being should be placed on trial for life or death everlasting.

NOT TWO CREATION ACCOUNTS

Higher Critics, anxious to discredit the Bible, claim that the second chapter of Genesis is another account of the whole creation written by a different person. They claim that it gives a different order of creation, showing man created first, and then trees, beasts, etc. To us this is all foolishness. Moses, having described creation in its logical order, merely emphasizes and particularizes some of his previous statements.

He declares (Genesis 2:4) that he has already described the generation or developments of things heavenly and earthly from the beginning, before there was any plant life. Incidentally he mentions that at that time there was no rain—before the flood. He again assures us that man was God's last creation, to be the king or supervisor of earth. Then, much to our satisfaction, Moses proceeds to give an account of the specialty of man's creation, so different from that of the lower animals and vegetation. He was not evolved, but was God's handiwork. He was not spirit, but flesh, formed of the dust of the ground. But still he had the spirit of life common to all the lower creatures, of whom he was the head or king. The Hebrew reads, literally, "In his nostrils the breath of lives"—the breath or spirit of life common to all breathing creatures.

Then a description of Eden follows, how God particularly supervised its preparation as the home of the king of earth, in which God placed him. Nothing in this implies that Eden was made after Adam's creation. On the contrary, we have already been informed that God's creative work ceased with the production of Mother Eve, and that since then he has rested or desisted from further mundane creation—leaving to his glorious Son, Messiah, the work of human redemption and restitution.—Acts 3:19-21.

When we read (V. 19) that all animals that God had previously created were named by Adam, it would be foolish for us to suppose that the animals were a subsequent creation. This bringing of all creatures to Adam's attention implies his mastery of them all and leads up to the statement that in none of them was he able to find fellowship and companionship. God wished him to realize the need of a companion and wife before providing her.

MAN ORIGINALLY SEXLESS

The details of human creation imply that Adam lived in Eden some time alone and sexless. Some Bible students infer from the chronology that it was about two years from the time of Adam's creation until the expulsion from Eden under the death sentence. The cause for the division of Adam into two persons is stated; the earth was to be filled, populated with a race of his species, and amongst all the creatures none was suitable as a companion for him or fit to be his mate, and the mother of an offspring in his likeness.

Thus again is shown that Adam was distinctly different from apes and monkeys, and all the other creatures placed under his control. He was in the likeness of his Creator. Other Scriptures show us that after the earth shall have been filled with a population, it is the divine purpose that the sex quality in humanity shall be dropped. Jesus' words are, "They that shall attain unto that age (of perfection—future) will neither marry nor be given in marriage, but be like the angels of heaven"—sexless. See Luke 20:34-36.

The division of Adam into two parts, male and female, left the headship with the male, but deprived him of some of his sympathetic qualities. His wife, predominating in the sympathetic tendencies, had in her perfection less of the masculine and aggressive traits; but the two were perfectly adapted to each other's needs and fulfilled each other's ideals. The fall from God's favor has affected both sexes and has disturbed the original balance and harmony, producing extremes of coarseness and effeminacy, destroying perfection and robbing the marriage relationship of much of its ideal happiness.

The restitution or resurrection of the willing and obedient, to be brought about by Messiah's kingdom, will not mean the restoration of sex perfections, but rather the gradual perfecting of each individual in the image and likeness of God in personal completeness, such as Adam possessed before his division.

The sex attractions having passed away, man will not be alone, as Adam was originally; for the earth will be full of

human brethren, all in the image of God and in fullest fellowship of spirit, enjoying the world-wide Eden. Such a condition of things can be appreciated only as we take the Divine standpoint and realize the superior perfection of God and the angels in their sexless condition—though always spoken of as masculine.

"BY ONE MAN'S DISOBEDIENCE"

Note the consistency of the Bible theory which necessitated the division of one man into male and female. God purposed that the entire race must proceed from the one man. He foresaw sin and how he would permit it to flourish, and how he would provide for man's recovery. If two or more separate individuals had sinned and involved the race, it would have required just as many redeemers, according to the divine law, "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," a man's life for a man's life. (Deut. 19:21) Because God from the beginning intended only one Lamb of God, one glorious Redeemer, therefore the entire race sprang from the one man Adam, that "as by a man came death, by a man" should come "the resurrection of the dead."—1 Cor. 15:21.

SECOND ADAM AND SECOND EVE

We should not forget that Adam and Eve in some respects foreshadowed Christ and the church. Jesus personally is the great Savior of mankind, whose death constitutes the ransom-price for the sins of Adam and the entire race. He is to be the Great Life-Giver, or Father of mankind. During his Millennial reign he will give back earthly life to Adam and as many of his race as will receive it—raising them gradually, more and more, out of sin and death conditions, up to perfection during that thousand years,—"the times of refreshing that shall come from the presence of the Lord, . . . the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:19 to 21) This will be the glorious work of regenerating the world,—"whosoever will" may then drink the water of life freely.

But before beginning his work of regenerating the world, God has arranged that first from the wound in Christ's side, figuratively, an elect church shall be formed to be his companion and joint-heir in his kingdom—the second Eve, on the spirit plane, as he, the Heavenly One, is the second Adam.

The church will not be the Life-Giver or Father, but she will be the mother, or care-taker of the regenerated hosts of humanity during the Millennium. Under her care the willing and obedient will retain the image of God in the flesh.

THE ENDING OF THE GENTILE TIMES

If in times past the records of history had been kept as they are at present, there would seem to be no excuse for any discrepancy or misunderstanding on the subject of chronology. But they were not so kept. In olden times it was the custom to date events according to the period of the reigning king, thus: In the third year of the reign of King Cyrus; in the seventh year of the reign of King Solomon, etc. As king followed king, some living a few months, some a few years, some many years, the threads of history were always in danger of becoming entangled. Indeed, no particular necessity was seen for keeping chronological records. Even the Bible merely relates these histories in their order, telling the number of the years of the life or of the reign of each king, without twisting these threads into one common cord of history.

So matters continued with little effort to arrange an exact chronology of human history, until the Sixth Century A. D. when Dionysius, a Roman abbot, set forth our present method of counting, styled the Christian Calendar. It undertook to mark the beginning of the Christian era with the birth of Christ, reckoned as January 1st. Previous history was reckoned and styled Before Christ (B. C.) and subsequent history was styled *Anno Domini* (A. D.)—in the year of our Lord.

Whether Dionysius began his A. D. period January 1st, A. D. 1, or whether he began it January 1st, A. D. 0, we may not be sure; neither may we feel too certain whether he began the B. C. dates December 31st, B. C. 0, or December 31st, B. C. 1. For all ordinary purposes this question would be rather immaterial. But it has a very important bearing on our calculation of Gentile Times. Even in this particular the matter seemed less important thirty or forty years ago than it does today; for now as we come down to the close of the Gentile Times we are disposed to give every feature a critical and microscopical examination not thought so necessary some years ago.

Then, we were content to say, "606 B. C. seems a well authenticated date for the destruction of Jerusalem

by Nebuchadnezzar, and B. C. 536 the date when the seventy years' appointed desolation of the land ceased." Our method adopted in the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES was a simple one. We said: The Bible times of Gentile supremacy and Israel's rejection equals 7 times 360, or 2,520 years. From this we deducted the date before Christ (B. C.) 606. Thus we found the year A. D. 1914.

AN OPEN QUESTION

Coming now to a very critical examination of the date 536 B. C., there is an open question: Shall we call it 536 full years to A. D., or 535 full years? The difference in time between October 1st and January 1st would be the fourth of a year; hence our query is respecting 536¼ or 535¼ years B. C. What is the proper method of calculation, is in dispute. If we count the first year B. C. as 0, then the date 536¼ B. C. is the proper one for the end of the seventy years of captivity. But if we begin to reckon it by counting the first year before the Christian era as B. C. 1, then evidently the desolation ended 535¼ years B. C.

As to the methods of counting, Encyclopaedia Britannica says, "Astronomers denote the year which preceded the first of our era as 0 and the year previous to that as B. C. 1—the previous year B. C. 2, and so on."

Whichever of these ways we undertake to calculate the matter the difference between the results is one year. The seventy years of Jewish captivity ended October, 536 B. C., and if there were 536¼ years B. C., then to complete the 2,520 years' cycle of the Times of the Gentiles would require 1913¾ years of A. D., or to October, 1914. But if the other way of reckoning were used, then there were but 535¼ years of the period B. C., and the remainder of the 2,520 years would reach to A. D. 1914¾ years, otherwise October, 1915.

Since this question is agitating the minds of a considerable number of the friends, we have presented it here in some detail. We remind the readers, however, that nothing in the

Scriptures says definitely that the trouble upon the Gentiles will be accomplished before the close of the Times of the Gentiles, whether that be October, 1914, or October, 1915. The trouble doubtless will be considerable before the final crash, even though that crash come suddenly, like the casting of a great millstone into the sea. (Rev. 18:21) The parallel between the Jewish harvest and the present harvest would corroborate the thought that the trouble to the full will be accomplished by October, 1915.

OUR CONSECRATION IS UNTO DEATH

Many of our readers will recall our reference to this subject in a sermon preached at Allegheny, Pa., January 11, 1904, and published in the *Pittsburgh Gazette*. We make an extract from that sermon as follows:—

"We find, then, that the Seven Times of Israel's punishment and the Seven Times of Gentile dominion are the same; and that they began with the captivity of Zedekiah, and, as will be seen from the Chart, they terminate with the year 1915. According to the best obtainable evidences on the subject, synchronized with the Scriptural testimony, Zedekiah's captivity took place in October, 605¾ years before A. D. 1. If we will add to this 1914¾ years, we will have the year, October, 1915, as the date for the end of Gentile supremacy in the world—the end of the lease of 2,520 years, which will not be renewed. Instead, he whose right the kingdom is, shall take possession of it. This, therefore, marks when the Lord himself shall assume control of the world's affairs, to end its reign of sin and death, and to bring in the True Light."

There surely is room for slight differences of opinion on this subject and it behooves us to grant each other the widest latitude. The lease of power to the Gentiles may end in October, 1914, or in October, 1915. And the period of intense strife and anarchy "such as never was since there was a nation" may be the final ending of the Gentile Times or the

beginning of Messiah's reign. [See Vol. 2, *SCRIPTURE STUDIES*.]

But we remind all of our readers again, that we have not prophesied anything about the Times of the Gentiles closing in a time of trouble nor about the glorious epoch which will shortly follow that catastrophe. We have merely pointed out what the Scriptures say, giving our views respecting their meaning and asking our readers to judge, each for himself, what they signify. These prophecies still read the same to us. Should we ever see reason for changing our belief, be assured we will be prompt to advise you respecting the same and give you the reason for it. However some may make positive statements of what they know, and of what they do not know, we never indulge in this; but we merely state that we believe thus and so, for such and such reasons.

Many disposed to cavil at every statement of faith respecting the time and ending of this age and the dawning of the new age are very positive in their assertions. Some of them declare that surely the end of this age cannot come for fifty thousand years yet. Others, with equal positiveness, declare that it may happen at any moment. Neither one gives any Scriptural proof. Then why should either of them criticize us for merely presenting the Scripture testimonies and our opinions respecting the signification of them, with the request that others investigate and form each his own opinion?

Finally, let us remember that we did not consecrate either to October, 1914, nor to October, 1915, or to any other date, but "unto death." If for any reason the Lord has permitted us to miscalculate the prophecies, the signs of the times assure us that the miscalculations cannot be very great. And if the Lord's grace and peace be with us in the future as in the past, according to his promise, we shall rejoice equally to go or to remain at any time, and to be in his service, either on this side the veil or on the other side, as may please our Master best.

ADVICE TO PILGRIMS, GOOD FOR ALL

TO THE PILGRIM BRETHREN OF I. B. S. A.

DEAR BRETHREN, BELOVED IN THE LORD:—I know well that as new creatures your desires are to lay down your life for the brethren. I know well, also, that the world, the flesh and the adversary (especially the latter) evidently oppose all who seek to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, particularly those in public places and those who are active in the service of the truth. These attacks come sometimes in one form and sometimes in another—sometimes through too much sympathy and sometimes through too little.

I feel constrained to give you some advice:

Do not do much writing of letters. Experience shows that those pilgrims who do much of this generally neglect the particular work in which they are supposed to be engaged. If there are questions needing answers, ten words on postcard will refer the friends to THE WATCH TOWER OFFICE, or to STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. We believe that the results would be far more profitable than if you would attempt to write lengthy discussions. In some instances the friends could be more profited. Is it not wise that we remember St. Paul's exhortation that the eye, the hand, the foot, strive to do its own part as members of the body of Christ? Your portion, dear Brethren, is a very honorable and important one. We believe that it will need all of your time, if properly attended to.

The forenoons, or times when there are no meetings, we

advise that brief visits be made to dear friends of whom you get word that they are sick, or for some other reason have not attended meetings of the class recently.

Such opportunities not presenting themselves, we suggest that you write a brief synopsis of your principal address (if you give a public one), suitable for the newspapers. This will be a valuable experience to you and may prove acceptable, and thus give the truth a wider swing. One dear brother has been very successful in this way. Not being much of a hand at writing nor much of a scholar, he inquired of me if he could use some of my sermons. I gave cheerful consent. Rewriting them, he has been able to get them into numbers of papers, and thus the truth has been circulated. We wish to give you all this same privilege.

Do not understand by this that we mean for you to go out of the pilgrim into the literary work, but merely that you seek for opportunities to write up something that may effect the scattering of the truth. The time thus employed would be much more useful in the Lord's service than in writing to the friends.

I remember you, in my petitions at the throne of heavenly grace and hope that I am remembered by you all. Remember me to the dear friends wherever you may go, assuring them that you bear my greetings. As ever,

Yours in the Fellowship of the Anointed,

C. T. RUSSELL.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEREAN CLASSES

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

In sending current report to Tabernacle I feel constrained to express anew my hearty Christian love for you, as I perceive the activity of our opponents increasing in their efforts to overthrow the work committed to you. You have our prayers, as well as our sympathy, in the trials incidental to the various attacks being made in the public press against you. I feel confident the same grace which has held you up in the past will prove sufficient to the end.

Most of the classes seem to be leaping forward in the things of the Spirit, as though trying to make amends for past slackness.

I notice a few classes making the serious mistake of thinking a constant change is essential to "keep from getting into a rut." Thus in one class the Lord evidently saw a more competent leader was needed, and he sent a brother to work here who had the necessary qualifications. After serving two six months' terms that spirit of change refused to elect him,

or, rather, prompted him to think he ought not to be elected again. The present elder is a good brother, but the two as elders together would be able to accomplish manifold more.—Eccle. 4:9-12.

That same idea causes this class to shift its meetings around, even including the Sunday services, until some of the irregular attendants are discouraged from going out for fear they will go to one home and find the meeting is not to be held there. That is one reason why they never become regular attendants.

Another thing, some of the classes need advice upon the conduct of Berean classes, as quite a few places where they think they have Berean classes they really have preaching services. The elder asks the questions, one or two of the friends give a very brief answer, and then the elder preaches a 10 or 15-minute sermon; this is repeated with next question, and so to the end.

There are some very small and weak classes where I can

imagine this might be allowable, but in every case where I have found it to be their method there seemed to be no excuse for it.

We have been enjoying very precious fellowship with the Brethren in Illinois, and are greatly rejoicing in the privileges of service in the cause which has as its object the glory of God. With much Christian Love.

Yours in His Precious Name, BENJ. H. BARTON.

THE EDITOR'S REPLY

I embrace this opportunity to endorse the statement of Brother Barton, given above. We need to keep well balanced. While the classes are to retain the full control of their own affairs, this does not mean that they should ever speak or thing slightly of those whom they have chosen, under what they believe to be divine guidance, to be their elders or leaders. Let us remember the Apostle's words, "Obey those who have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls as they that must give account."—Heb. 13:17.

A faithful leader, who does not attempt to take the control from the hands of the class, can be, and should be, trusted greatly. His is a labor of love, and not for filthy lucre; and the love of the whole class should be freely paid to him as in a measure a reward for his faithfulness in the service. This does not mean that the control should be left in the hands of one elder, nor that he should feel offended that others should be brought to the front, even if he be the most competent one. As elder brethren the leaders should be on the lookout to help, encourage and instruct all the younger brethren, and to prepare them for the work of deacon, and, subsequently, for eldership.

Some of the Lord's dear people seem a little inclined to run to the extreme. Strong characters are always in danger of going to extremes. The Apostle exhorts, "Let your moderation be known to all." To have our affairs conducted decently and in order is not Babylonish in any evil sense. Can we imagine heaven as without rules, regulations and order? Do we not recognize that order is heaven's first law? Does not the Apostle intimate that the Lord is setting the various members in the body as it pleases him? Could it be wrong for us to co-operate with God in the recognition of his will and in carrying it out? Surely not! It is just as bad, or even worse, for a small minority to tyrannize over the majority as it would be for a reasonable majority to tyrannize over the minority. The spirit of love bids us remember the Golden

Rule, and be as generous to others as we would have them be to us.

I quite agree with Brother Barton's suggestions respecting too great a desire for change. Recently we learned of one class which rotates its leaders every week. This would not be so bad, of course, for prayer and testimony meeting, though even then it would appear as if a month or a quarter would be better for each leader; but in the case of the Berean Studies a weekly change seems very injurious, both for the leader and for the class. Continuity, connection with previous lessons, is very desirable. We recommend at least three months' incumbency for Berean Study leaders.

RESPECTING BEREAN STUDIES

Brother Barton's suggestion is good, that a successful teacher is one who draws the answers from the class. It is in this very particular that the Berean Studies are helping the Lord's people more and more. Now, it is true that some persons who have a talent for talking or preaching have insufficient talent for teaching—for drawing answers from the class. In such a case it might be well to give different elders an opportunity to show whether they possess aptness to teach, which the Apostle explains to be one of the qualifications of an elder.

Many class leaders report that it is impossible for them to get the friends to study the lesson in advance. It is a pity that this is so, but it would not be wise to cause offense to any or to hinder any from attending the meetings by berating them for failure to study the lessons. We advise another course: At the beginning of each study let the pages of Studies in the Scriptures referred to in the lesson be read by some one capable of reading clearly, distinctly, forcibly; and then shut the books and discuss the subject along the lines of the questions. A very helpful way is for the leader to assist by gathering up some of the fragmentary statements of an answer and helping to put them together. The effect is to encourage the answerers for another occasion and to make the answers more valuable for the time. On the whole, the Berean Studies, we are sure, are doing very effective work in grounding and establishing in the truth.

We urge all the dear brethren that they keep up the regular reading of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, ten to twelve pages a day, wholly regardless of the Berean lessons. What will be read will be so much of aid in connection with the lesson studies.

WISDOM FOR HARD TIMES

Many people are wasteful without intending to be so. They do not know how to economize. Economy is less important to the rich than to the poor, yet the poor usually know nothing about true economy. Economy does not signify always the purchase of that which is cheapest, nor does it mean to purchase in various small quantities sparingly. In view of the possibilities of the near future we believe that "a word in season" will be helpful. Our advice would be to keep a good supply of fuel ahead, as storms and accidents might materially interrupt the supply—not to speak of strikes, embargoes, etc.

But our particular message now is in respect to food. We advise a fair supply of staple goods which do not run into money—rice, beans, peas, oatmeal, potatoes, salt, sugar. What we have enumerated are staples. Bought in reasonable quantities, they are the cheapest, as well as the most wholesome food. The rice and the potatoes are rich in starch, while the beans and peas are richly nitrogenous and largely take the place of meats in support of the human system.

Meat in moderate quantities is wholesome and desirable,

but not indispensable where beans and peas are used freely. However, certain portions of beef are sold cheap everywhere, the objection usually being that the cheap portions are tough. We want to give our readers a recipe, by the use of which they can always have tender meat, even though they buy the cheapest and toughest.

The recipe is the use of a small quantity of the best vinegar in the preparation of the meat. Press the tough pieces of meat tightly into a jar, and put just enough water on it to cover it. Note the quantity of water used, and allow two teaspoonfuls of vinegar to a pint of water—a tablespoonful to a quart, and in same proportion for larger quantities. Let this vinegar and water remain upon the meat over night. In the morning cook your meat in whatever way you may please, and it will be tender. The same treatment will make the toughest fowls tender. If the vinegar is not quite good and strong, a larger quantity will be needed. In frying steak, a teaspoonful of vinegar put into a large frying-pan will give the steak a spicy flavor and make it tender. WATCH TOWER readers need never have tough meat hereafter.

DISCIPLINE

The hammer of thy discipline, O Lord,
Strikes fast and hard. Life's anvil rings again
To thy strong strokes. And yet we know 'tis then
That from the heart's hot iron all abroad
The rich glow spreads. Great Fashioner divine,
Who spareth not, in thy far-seeing plan,
The blows that shape the character of man,
Or fire that makes him yield to touch of thine,
Strike on, then, if thou wilt! For thou alone
Canst rightly test the temper of our will,

Or tell how these base metals may fulfill
Thy purpose—making all our life thine own.
Only we do beseech thee, let the pain
Of fiery ordeals through which we go
Shed all around us such a warmth and glow,
Such cheerful showers of sparks in golden rain,
That hard hearts may be melted, cold hearts fired,
And callous hearts be taught to feel and see
That discipline is more to be desired
Than all the ease that keeps us back from thee.

AN INTERESTING LETTER

PASTOR RUSSELL:—May I write you my joyful experience in which our dear Father so clearly used you and a tract. In 1879 I joined a church in a small town where the re-

ligious atmosphere seemed to be good. After some years I moved to a city and at once I identified myself with the church there. I soon noticed the absence of the simplicity