

manifested in the great redemptive sacrifice, and of his intention to bless the world through the glorified Christ by appoint-

ing "times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began."—Acts 3:21.

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CLUBBING ARRANGEMENT FOR 1905

As usual, all WATCH TOWER subscriptions for the United States for 1905 will include subscriptions to the Old Theology Quarterly. And this year we have effected a special arrangement by which all paid WATCH TOWER subscriptions for 1905 will include without extra charge, a subscription to the *Solon*

Journal (monthly) for four months. It is a secular journal of good tone; price with privileges \$2 a year. Its claims for public recognition we heartily endorse, having profited thereby ourselves. Its advantages apply only within the United States. All U. S. subscribers may look for their first number in January.

BROTHER RUSSELL'S SUNDAY DISCOURSES

The following journals are now publishing Brother Russell's sermons regularly, viz:—

The Schneckady Union.....Schneckady, N. Y.
The State.....Columbia, S. C.
The Pittsburg Gazette.....Pittsburg, Pa.

The arrangement with the latter was for one year, and expires with the present month. Should it not be renewed all of its unexpired subscriptions sent to us for it will be placed in other journals publishing the discourses as a regular weekly feature.

CHRISTENDOM'S ANXIOUS SITUATION

BY REV. E. F. BURR, D.D.

We see, in many pleasant respects, just what the Fathers saw. The old Christian flag is still waving; the old Christian creeds still maintain their places; the old Christian sanctuaries are still open every Sabbath; ministers preach and pray in them still; there are still prayer meetings, and sacraments, and Sunday Schools, and Bible Schools, and Salvation Armies, and Northfields, and Bible Leagues, and Christian Endeavorers. It is not a surface Sahara by any means.

And yet the condition of things among us is very serious—so serious that it would be the height of unwisdom to blink it. Beneath the fair crust of Christian forms and professions boils and tosses an amazing amount of un-Christian and anti-Christian thinking. We do not know exactly how much; but that it is formidably great we do know. Every now and then eruptions occur which startle us as with a blow. Latterly, these outbreaks have sometimes come in groups and with almost volcanic violence; and the impact on us has been as when the smith with both hands smites the anvil. We are shocked—shocked at the mass of destructive material belched out from most unexpected quarters; from pulpits noted for orthodoxy; from seminaries supposed to be bound to the old Gospel by more than seven green withes, which not even a Samson could break; from Associations, Presbyteries, Conferences where grey heads listen patiently to attacks on the Bible, which a few years ago would have raised a storm of astonishment and protest.

Lo, the new departures of a few years ago have expanded into the "new Christianity" of the higher criticism, the destructive criticism of the Bible. Under the ægis of the Christian name this unwelcome immigrant has come to great estate among us. Its shadow covers and chills great denominations, great presses and great educational institutions. To multitudes the Old Testament is gone and the New Testament is either gone or going. Not a few deny or question fundamental Christian doctrines—the messiahship of Jesus, his miraculous birth and incarnation, his miracles, his atonement, his resurrection and ascension, and even his reliability as a religious teacher. Many whose standing in the ministry is still unchallenged question all these doctrines; and very many more are plainly feeling their way to the same depths at various stages of descent. These men, even the most radical of them, are preaching their views without hindrance in our churches and presses. They occupy chairs in our colleges and seminaries. The defection is so great that no ecclesiastical discipline is attempted. Courts, civil and ecclesiastical, have been appealed to in vain to prevent the perversion of trust funds defended by oaths and creeds as strong as human ingenuity could make them. In spite of ironclad creeds and quinquennial oaths rationalism has appropriated many strategic positions in the high places of the field. The leading colleges of New England invite to their chairs and pulpits the most radical Unitarians, Universalists and Rationalists; and, as if the home supply was not large enough, are at the trouble of importing them. Whole associations, Presbyteries, conferences, are dominated by views of the Bible which defy all the Protestant confessions and which would, a few years ago, have been met by storms of protest and excommunication.

In view of this general situation the friends of the old Bible naturally look with anxious eyes to see where stand their missionary societies. What do they find? I will speak only for Congregationalists. Other Protestant denominations must speak for themselves. Just now they may find themselves much better off than their neighbors; but they will, at least, find that

they are being menaced by like conditions. We should at least serve as a warning.

OUTLOOK OF CONGREGATIONALISTS

What do Congregationalists find? They find that the higher criticism now sits at the council board and swarms in the constituency of each of their three missionary societies. Whoever sees that much sees reason for grave apprehension. All these societies are on the brink—liable to be crowded over it at any moment by the pressure from behind. . . .

Is there not cause for uneasiness? Have not evangelical churches reason to fear that as little discrimination is made in the laborers sent into the home mission fields as exalts among the men sending them? Is it not certain that men who think that higher critics of an extreme type are suitable persons for the championships and directorships and presidencies of missionary societies will think them suitable for mission work in the field? Our misgivings are very great. Our fears are stronger in the battle than our hopes. We are willing and even anxious to contribute to send the old Gospel into all fields, believing it to be the power of God unto salvation; but we are not willing to do as much for another Gospel. It is forbidden us. So we feel obliged to query with our two home missionary societies: "What are you doing with our contributions? What sort of men are you sending into the mission fields in our names? Let us know. It looks more and more as if you must be sending forth men whom it is against our consciences to send and support. Is it so?"

Again our three missionary societies are so linked to a fourth that whatever patronage is given to one is measurably given to all. They present themselves for patronage in a lump, make a common appeal, have a common publication, divide among themselves certain common expenses and receipts, and are thinking of a common anniversary. We cannot bless one without blessing all; cannot help the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions without helping the Congregational Sunday School and Publishing Society.

And yet this latter society, acting in the name of all our churches, and at the expense of all of them, is engaged in publishing books and Sunday School helps and a weekly newspaper notoriously and grossly in the interest of the higher criticism—the newspaper presumably bought and supported, in part at least, by denominational funds and claiming denominational authority. Moreover, this society has just come into avowed alliance with a well-known organ of the higher criticism; namely, "The American Institute of Sacred Literature," for the purpose of capturing in its interests our Sunday School teachers.

Such is the society which all our churches are now being urged to support liberally—urged by the common voice of all our denominational societies, as expressed in innumerable circulars, in a plan for having a special agency for each society in each church, and in the actual appointment of a field secretary to give his whole time to the work of swelling the contributions of all the churches to all the societies—not excepting the most objectionable. Is this tolerable? Do not the other missionary societies see that their working in harness with such a society, and even helping to gild and draw its special chariot, is fitted to disturb confidence in themselves? Would not all evangelical churches feel wronged at having their contributions so used if they were aware of it?

But they are not aware. For some reason the shepherds have not spoken, or have spoken the wrong thing. Even watchmen who have clearly seen the enemy entering the gates in force, and have deplored the fact, have not seen their way clear to put trumpet to their lips. Wonderful silence! And so the churches do not know that the Philistines are upon them. Are not misgivings (or more) in order under such circumstances? Unless something is done, in due time our whole city will be taken, our whole lump will be leavened with unbelief, at the expense, largely, to believers. Are believers ready for this?

"RATIONALISTIC SEMINARIES"

Another fact gives us even profounder concern—gives vast weight and exasperation to our other sources of anxiety. If all our educational institutions were in the hands of believing and faithful men, backsliding missionary societies would not mean so much. They must soon retrace their steps or die. But, as matters now stand, they threaten to go from bad to worse by endless reinforcement from behind. All the leading colleges in the East, and all our technical Congregational seminaries both East and West, are in active sympathy with the principles and methods of the higher criticism—as is shown either by the position of those who control them, or by publications of their professors, or by the reports of their students, or by the radical critics invited to their lectureships and decorated with their honors.

This is the condition of things which actually exists among Congregationalists, and threatens all our Protestant denominations. It is a very serious condition—so serious that to realize it almost takes one's breath away; only leaving breath enough to exclaim, "When the foundations are destroyed what can the righteous do!"

Of course rationalistic seminaries must be expected to produce, mostly, rationalists. Here and there, one heavily reinforced by a sound conversion and a sound home training, will resist the influences of the seminary; but such cases will be few. Practically, the entire output of our seminaries at present is higher critics. What becomes of them? Somehow the Congregational public absorbs them all. Some, by grace of easy-going councils, become pastors of self-supporting churches. The rest are being sent forth by our missionary societies. How can it be otherwise? From what other sources than their seminaries can these societies draw their recruits? They must take higher critics or none. As matters now stand they must do it or go out of business. But they have not gone out of business. They are still busy at sending out appeals and missionaries—sending them out at the expense of all the Congregational churches, nearly or quite all of whom, in the older States, have evangelical creeds and histories. Are we content with this? Ought we to be?

NEW MISSIONARIES INFIDELS

Just now, on all the mission fields, are many men to whom no exception can be taken—men of an earlier and better training. *But they are becoming fewer every year, and their places are being filled with their opposites.* If the present condition of our seminaries continues, and our missionary societies continue to do as they are now doing, and have been doing for some time, what but the higher criticism, with its eviscerated Bible, will occupy the field at home and abroad? Can evangelical churches be reasonably asked to assist such a result by their contributions? It is asking them to commit suicide.

Are we invited to bear in mind that all the forms of higher criticism which the seminaries are engaged in teaching, and the missionary societies are engaged in distributing, are not equally gross? We do bear it in mind. We remember that some higher critics are standing on the crumbling edge of the precipice; that others are clinging to its ragged sides at various stages of descent, and that very many are lying on the jagged rocks at the bottom, all broken to pieces. No—all are not as yet broken to pieces; but all are in imminent danger of being so. For, they all decline to treat the Old Testament as Christ treated it, and, in the treatment of both Testaments, all approve and act on those general principles and methods of Biblical criticism whose logical and historical terminus is a Bible without supernaturalism and without authority.

"THOROUGH-GOING INFIDELS"

And, somehow, the most broken of these critics manage to do their work under shelter of the old creeds, and while wearing the purple robes of Christian professors and ministers. We do not see how they can put this and that together. To us the man seems like a thorough-going infidel. He talks like an infidel in private; he writes like an infidel; he is doing the work of an infidel; and infidels rejoice over the work he is doing and call him brother. But he denies the kinship. He says that he is a Christian and doing Christian work. Does he not subscribe to a Christian creed, hold a high Christian office, draw a Christian salary, sometimes praise the Christian Bible to the skies?

Though he rejects all the fundamental Christian doctrines and tears the Bible to tatters, he says to all the azimuths that he is the best of Christians. It looks to us extremely like saying that black is white; that falsehood is truth; that sin is holiness; that infidelity is Christianity. We tremble for the dictionary as well as for the Bible. Have words no meaning that can be depended on? Are we all at sea in the use of the English language? The Son of Man was betrayed with a kiss—perhaps our friend, the enemy, will take it hard that we remind him of that ancient tragedy. In war, the soldier who, being in command of a fortress for his king, busies himself in making breaches in its walls and hewing down its gates in the presence of the enemy is not called a loyal subject though he continues to fly the king's flag and wear his uniform and eat his bread.

NO "TRUMPET" IN CHRISTENDOM

In view of the foregoing facts, are not the friends of the old Bible justified in grave misgivings, even anxieties, as to the future of their missions and churches? But these anxieties may well be enhanced when they consider that the churches in general do not as yet fully realize their danger. Individual laymen, here and there, have come to know and feel the peril; but the churches, as such, are not awake. No trumpet has sounded—at least none to which they are tuned. They are not given to reading controversial theology, bristling with technicals and subtleties and dead languages. In a dim sort of way they may know that the Bible is under fire; and they experience that lowering of spiritual tone and activity that naturally comes from living in an atmosphere largely charged with impurities of doubt and cavil, but they do not realize the extent to which ministers and institutions have fallen away from the Fathers and the Mayflower. They are still relying on certificates of church membership, of seminary training, of licensures and examinations and approvals by councils and associations, to protect their pupils from fundamental errorists. Once these were reliable safeguards. They are such no longer. But the laymen are not awake to the fact; do not understand that now, at least in New England, there is little or nothing to hinder errorists of the most radical sort from appearing in their pulpits. The doors are wide open—wide open.

AN ILLUSTRATION IN HYPOCRISY

A man enters. Who is he? Possibly, a higher critic of the grossest kind. He has no Old Testament at all. As to the New Testament, he has little of that left—no incarnation; no miracles; no resurrection; no ascension; no atonement; no infallible teacher—nothing but a poor sort of Buddha loaded down with blasphemous pretensions and speaking a bit of the sermon on the mount. If his parishioners could hear him talk in private, or in ministerial circles more or less sympathetic, they would be astonished and dismayed. They would say, "This man is an *infidel*, as much so as Tom Paine." And they would say the truth. An infidel is what he really is. But it is not what he appears to his hearers. He appears at first to them as a devout Christian. He comes to them in the name of Christ and his Christianity. He marches under a Christian banner and wears a Christian uniform. He wears clerical clothes and manners, stands in what has long been an orthodox pulpit, has orthodox looks and tones and words in preaching and praying, has actually joined their local church with its Puritan creed. Must he not be all right? Being victims of appearances, his hearers are likely to say Yes; are likely to receive the man for what he appears to be—a teacher come from God, an angel of light. They will have open ears for what the angel will have to say.

What will he say? The people expect serpents to hiss, dogs to bark, lions to roar and infidels to advertise themselves with a trumpet. This infidel will do nothing of the sort. Nothing startling nor disturbing will come from him at first. He has been taught better. His teachers have shown him by example, if not by precept, a more excellent way. It is a prudent way, a cautious way, a way of preparation and education by littles and littles. He will introduce a new newspaper. He will recommend a new book. In due time he will confess that he does not think so highly as some do of creeds and dogmas and heresy trials. So he proceeds by easy stages from hesitations to insinuations, from insinuations to plain doubts, from doubt to denials—at last the whole camel follows the nose. He has prepared his way just as his teachers did theirs. He has worked in velvet slippers for a while; for a while has been careful not to tread on ancient and rheumatic toes. To the last he continues to pose as a true sheep whose fleece is of the finest and heaviest; as a warm friend of that Bible whose integrity and authority he is engaged in shredding away. Is it to be wondered at that he meets with a measure of success; perhaps warps over a majority of his church into rationalism—all but the impossible elect?

Behold a church stripped of all safeguards and then exposed to the sharp practice of a supposed friend! No wonder if it falls an easy prey. Cæsar, without his shield and cuirass and mail, easily falls when friend Brutus strikes.

The fact is that the misgivings and anxieties warranted by the present condition of our colleges and seminaries and denominational societies, great as these anxieties are, should be much enhanced when we consider that our churches generally are not aware of the extent of the ministerial apostasy, have lost the ancient safeguards against it, and are now being attacked from within by enemies who swear by all the evangelists that they are best friends.

"A GIANT SPECTER"

Such is the state of things in the constituency of our Congregational missionary societies. It is at least a condition that threatens all the Protestant denominations. One part of the people have lost all faith in the Bible as a supernatural book; and they are largely the leaders of the people. Another part is uncertain what to believe. And still another part that believe as firmly as ever have, at the very least, great misgivings as to what their societies are actually doing; whether they are not sending forth another gospel, and sending it at the expense of the evangelical churches. All parts are breathing an unwholesome atmosphere, misty with doubts and cavil and venturesome speculations. Is not this sufficient cause for almost

any amount of falling off in missionary contributions and ministerial supply?

And yet the managers of our missionary societies ignore the anxious situation altogether. They express surprise that their operations are so poorly supported. What can be the matter with the churches? Why are they giving rills instead of rivers? Not an audible word comes from officialdom to show that they understand the situation. Neither in their official organs, nor in the formal reports and appeals at anniversaries, is there anything to show but that they have before them the public of fifty years ago. They do not even recognize the presence anywhere in their fields of such a thing as the higher criticism. Is it possible that their eyes are holden so that they do not see a *giant SPECTER stalking through the Protestant world and smiting the very foundations of Christian missions?* It is not possible. They are aware of "the pestilence that walketh in darkness and the destruction that wasteth at noon day;" but, for some reason, they think it best, on the whole, not to manifest their knowledge. They may be right. But if all friends of the Bible should do the same—should neglect to give the plague its true name, to warn the public against it, and to take measures for quarantining and suppressing it—common sense would be outraged, the truth and Christ betrayed, and the whole land become a charnel house. Which may God and his people forbid!

"THOU SHALT WORSHIP THE LORD THY GOD, AND HIM ONLY SHALT THOU SERVE"

LUKE 4:8.—DECEMBER 18.

This is the Golden Text of a review lesson intended to refresh our minds respecting the Lord's dealings with Israel, as portrayed in all the lessons of the present quarter. It is placed before the end of the three months, that the last Sunday of the period, being Christmas, may have a more suitable topic.

We recommend a general re-examination of the lessons of the quarter as a good means of refreshing the mind and the heart. Others see in the Lord's special dealings with Israel his general supervision of the nations of the world and a general responsibility of all peoples, similar to that of the Jews; but we see in all these things the very reverse lesson, namely, that the children of Jacob, called Israel, subsequent to the division into the two kingdoms known as Ephraim and Judah, were God's specially covenanted people, and were dealt with in a different manner from other nations. The Word of the Lord on the subject is very explicit. Through the Prophet he declares, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." (Amos 3:2) This nation alone had special divine supervision of its affairs and the promises and instructions, through the prophets, the law, etc. The Gentile nations, as the Apostle explains, were "strangers, aliens and foreigners from the commonwealth of Israel"—"without God, having no hope in the world."—Eph. 2:12.

Very true, the Lord did in a general way exercise toward all nations a law of cause and effect which we still see in operation in every quarter of the world, and he did supervise the affairs of the other nations to the extent of not permitting them to interfere with the general outlines of his plan and his times and seasons. For instance, we see that at the appropriate time for the exodus God specially raised up Pharaoh to the throne of Egypt because he was a particularly headstrong man, who would resist the exodus of that people and thus bring down upon the nation the ten plagues which they well deserved and which would be typical of certain plagues in the end of this age against the antitype of Pharaoh, namely, Satan, who shall be ultimately overwhelmed, and all people desiring to be God's people shall be delivered from his yoke of bondage.

Similarly, at the time for the removal of the typical diadem from Israel, God's providences favored the exaltation of Nebuchadnezzar as a world emperor, the head, the first of a series of universal empires whose united reigns he foreshadowed would constitute the "times of the Gentiles," the beginning and ending of which times are clearly marked. Evidently divine power had to do with the beginning of these times of the Gentiles and will have even more to do with their closing, at which time Immanuel shall take the reins of government, the result being the dashing to pieces of the nations by the iron rod of his authority.—Rev. 2:27.

It is interesting to note that although the higher critics of today take precisely the same grounds as the open infidels of a century ago, so far as an attempt to discredit the Bible is concerned, nevertheless they have been obliged to alter and amend those arguments to fit the new conditions. Modern excava-

tions in Babylon and in Egypt have brought to light many interesting matters which all tend to corroborate the Scripture records which infidelity of a century ago held as unauthentic and totally misleading. But while forced to acknowledge that in a general way they corroborate the Scriptures, these modern infidels do attempt to prove by these old records that the scriptural chronology is wholly at fault. They attempt to stretch out history so as to prove that some of the records were written earlier than the date which the Scriptures assign to Adam. Their reasonings are specious, false, but nevertheless they are deceptive to some who do not discern that these learned gentlemen are striving hard to make these ancient records contradict the Scriptures.

There is a deceptive plausibility in their reasoning, too: they attempt to count up the many kings, assigning each his period, and the sum of these reigns would indeed extend back a long distance; but do we not see that they are manifestly and willingly ignorant of the fact that probably many of these "kings" were merely under-kings and princes, just as we have today an illustration in Germany: the emperors are one line of monarchs in Germany while the kings of the various states of Germany have so many other lines of ancestry. To string these all together and treat them as one dynasty would mean confusion, blindness to the truth; it would imply a quadrupling of the length of German history. We may be sure that in due time, when all the facts shall be opened up, the Bible record will be substantiated, as it has been substantiated in every contest in the past. A little history of some of the findings referred to may not be amiss here. We quote:—

SUCCESSFUL RESEARCH IN ANCIENT LANDS

"Many discoveries in the temples of Egypt and the ruins of Assyria, buried for twenty-five hundred years, throw great light on the Old Testament Scriptures. There has been discovered at Karnak, near Thebes in Egypt, a splendid structure erected by the very Shishak, king of Egypt, who conquered Rehoboam (1 Kings 14:25-28; 2 Chron. 12:1-2), for the purpose of commemorating his victories. On the walls is sculptured the giant figure of the great conqueror, standing erect among the thirty-eight kings and rulers he has subdued. Among these captives stands a Jewish figure, distinguished by his beard, with a rope around his neck to indicate that he has been conquered. The Egyptian king is represented as striking down the Hebrews with a colossal club. The name of Judah appears on the sculptures.

"The Moabite stone, discovered in 1868, in Dibon, east of Jordan, and now in the Louvre, Paris, contains an inscription by Mesha, king of Moab, recording events in the reigns of Omri and Ahab, and reads almost like a chapter of 2 Kings. The black obelisk discovered by Mr. Layard in Nineveh, describes the campaigns of Shalmaneser, and mentions Jehu and his tribute to Assyria. Royal tablets from the stone libraries of Nineveh mention Uzziah, Pekah and Hoshea. On one slab from his palace Sargon tells the story of the capture of Samaria.

The Taylor Cylinder, found in Nineveh in 1830, and now in the British Museum, describes Sennacherib's conquest of Judah in the time of Hezekiah. The stone records of Assyrian history, called the 'Eponym Canon,' discovered in 1862, in Nineveh, by Sir Henry Rawlinson, help us to gain a more exact knowledge of the dates of this period."

Our Golden Text, which constitutes the caption of this article, contains a valuable thought for any occasion, but one especially suited to this review. Looking at the history of God's earthly people, Israel after the flesh, we can readily see that all of their difficulties and failures to attain to the blessings that were before them, were closely associated with neglect of the truth set forth in our Golden Text. They did not sufficiently sanctify the Lord God in their hearts and let him be the only fear and only dread—fear to displease him, dread to come under his reproof. On the contrary, they were prone to forget the Lord and all the blessings and mercies they had received from him and the obligations they were under to him.

They forgot, too, that a part of the covenant entered into between the Lord and them was that if as a people they would honor him and serve him he would bless and honor them, but if as a people they rejected or neglected him, they were to have special disciplines and corrections. Their neglect of the Lord, their seeking without the Lord to establish themselves and to have the assistance and co-operation, and to adopt the manners, customs, etc., of foreign nations, all these were a part of their failure to properly worship the Lord and serve him alone. How great was their mistake! And yet we are to remember that a remnant did not make this mistake, though they were few. This

remnant already received a blessing in the present life and are to have a still greater share in the favors of God in the coming age.

Similarly nominal spiritual Israel has neglected the counsel of this Golden Text, and, instead of having the Lord first, has been disposed to forget the Lord and to affiliate with the world, to seek worldly favor and co-operation. Fear to displease the world has largely controlled churchianity; desire to have the world's favor and approval has apparently been more important before the mind of churchianity than the approval of the Lord and a fear of the loss of his favor.

As a result we see today worldly customs in the professed church of Christ, and note that these worldly customs have drawn into the nominal church, as they were intended to do, large numbers of the world, unjustified, unsanctified, "tares," and that these now quite overwhelm the few who are loyal to the Lord and the spirit of his Truth. Nevertheless there is today, and has been all throughout the Gospel age, a "little flock," a "remnant," which did indeed trust the Lord, and which did indeed sanctify the Lord God in their hearts and make him alone their fear and him alone their dread—fear to displease him, dread to lose the light of his kindness, his favor. We trust, dear friends, that the majority of those who read these words are of the latter class. If so all things are working together for good to such, because they love the Lord and have been called according to his purpose, and are seeking to make their calling and election sure by so running as to obtain the prize.

"THE PRINCE OF PEACE"

ISAIAH 9:1-7.—DECEMBER 25.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."—R. V.

Even though Christmas day is not the real anniversary of our Lord's birth, but more properly the annunciation day or the date of his human begetting (Luke 1:28), nevertheless, since the celebration of our Lord's birth is not a matter of divine appointment or injunction, but merely a tribute of respect to him, it is not necessary for us to quibble particularly about the date. We may as well join with the civilized world in celebrating the grand event on the day which the majority celebrate—"Christmas day." The lesson for the occasion is a most happy choice, fitting well to the series of lessons it follows.

The first verse seems much better translated in the Revised Version, thus: "But there will be no gloom in her that was in anguish. In former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time hath he made it glorious, by way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the nations." The Prophet penned these words probably shortly after the ten-tribe kingdom known as Ephraim had gone into captivity to Assyria. Zebulun and Naphtali were the names of the principal districts of Ephraim; and Isaiah, prophetically looking from those desolated lands of his time, under the guidance of the holy Spirit, points out that in the latter time a great blessing is coming to those very lands.

It was centuries after Isaiah's prophecy that our dear Redeemer appeared among men and spent most of his time, did most of his mighty works, and performed most of his mighty miracles in these lands of Zebulun and Naphtali, called Galilee, which in the time of Isaiah had been denuded of its Jewish population and had been settled by Gentile emigrants. "Galilee of the Gentiles." Subsequently these Gentiles gathered more particularly in the vicinity of the city of Samaria, and became known as Samaritans, and, noting the hopes of the Israelites, were inclined to claim a certain share in the blessings belonging to the people into whose lands they had been introduced. The Jews, however, disowned them as being still Gentiles, and would have no dealings with the Samaritans, as the Apostle pointed out.

Our Lord himself instructed the apostles to go not in the way of the Gentiles nor into any city or the Samaritans to announce him, declaring that he was not sent to any but the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He again declared to one of these Samaritans, "Ye worship ye know not what: we [the Jews] know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews." (John 4:22) Outside of the Samaritan districts all of Galilee became repopulated with Jews, though they represented generally the less noble class, so that it was rather as a mark of disrespect that our Lord and the apostles were called Galileans, Nazareth of Galilee being our Lord's home in his youth—a disesteemed city, as in the expression, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Our Lord indeed was born in Bethlehem, a more honorable city. Under divine providence he was taken to Nazareth, to the intent that a certain amount of odium might at-

tach to him and to his cause. Thus often the Lord permits some unsavory influence to attach to the Truth, to the intent that none may receive his message except from the love of the Truth—that none should be influenced to receive it from any earthly consideration.

THE LIGHT SHINED IN THE DARK VALLEY

The second verse of the lesson fitted well to Galilee: "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light." As our Lord declared, "The light shined in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." He was the light of the world and was in the world and the world knew him not. But there is a higher and deeper and broader sense in which these words are to be understood—they apply to all peoples who have been favored with the opening of the eyes of their understanding during this Gospel age.

The people of Galilee in the day of our Lord's personal ministry, and other parts of the earth since with a similar humble class of people, have more or less had amongst them representatives of the true light, and in every case the light has shined in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not, as our Lord declared to be the case. Only a few appreciate this shining now because, as the Apostle declared, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not"—the eyes of their understanding are so darkened by false doctrines, misunderstanding and superstition that they cannot see those glorious things which can now be seen only by the eye of faith, the eyes of their understanding being opened.

That the prophecy was not confined to the people of Galilee is evident from the last clause of the second verse, "They that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." The land of the shadow of death is the whole world, for the shadow of death has been on the whole world ever since the first transgression in Eden, ever since the curse or sentence of death was pronounced against our race. As the Prophet David describes it, the Lord's true people are blessed even while in the present valley and under the shadow of death; he says, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for thou art with me." It is to this class who walk with the Lord, who trust him, that the true light now shines—not as the glorious Sun of Righteousness, as it will shine by and by when the Millennial kingdom is established, but merely as the little lamp. "Thy Word is a lamp to my feet, a lantern to my footsteps."

This lamp shines not for the world but for those who are the Lord's special people, to whom the light of his revelation, the lamp of enlightenment is granted. All these thus walking in this valley, under the guidance and care of the great Captain of our Salvation, have indeed seen a great light in him, have seen a light which the world sees not. But, thank God, the world's time to see the great light is shortly coming, drawing nigh. As soon as the present work of selecting the church,

the bride, the body members, is complete, these—changed, glorified—shall constitute the great Sun of Righteousness to shine forth upon the world, the light of divine truth, the message of divine love and mercy and instruction in righteousness. These—Christ the head and the church his body—shall be the great Teacher of the world, who shall instruct all, and shall bring as many as are willing into full fellowship and perfection—destroying the unwilling and unworthy in the second death.

JACOB'S RESCUE NEAR

But evidently the Prophet's vision, while it glanced upon the preaching of our Lord and the apostles in Galilee, and glanced down through the Gospel age and noted how this light glistened here and there as a wonderful "lamp," nevertheless rested not until it reached the very end of this age. There in prophetic vision Isaiah seems to see the end of Jacob's trouble—Israel's deliverance from the blindness that has been upon her, her acceptance of the Lord as the Messiah at the time mentioned by another prophet, when the Lord would pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication and they should look upon him whom they had pierced and mourn for him—at the time mentioned by the Apostle Paul, when the fullness of the Gentiles having come in (the full number of the Gentiles to complete the elect number of the church), divine mercy shall go forth from the church to bless the world and shall rest first of all upon Israel according to the flesh, "They shall obtain mercy through your mercy."—Rom. 11:31.

The third and fourth verses of our lesson, we believe, are near fulfillment. In the Revised Version it reads, "Thou hast multiplied the nation, thou hast increased her joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, thou hast broken as in the day of Midian." The nation of Israel is much increased today, the estimate at the present time being between ten and twelve millions. Their joy is not yet accomplished because this great deliverance here mentioned has not yet been accomplished. It is to be accomplished in the day of trouble, shortly after October, 1914, we believe. The reference here to their deliverance being similar to that in the day of Midian signifies that, as in the days of Midian the Lord specially manifested divine power by which Gideon and a handful with him smote an immense army and delivered Israel from the oppressor, so here in the end of this age the glorified Lord and his glorified church, the little flock, the antitype of Gideon and his band, will deliver Israel with a similar mighty manifestation of divine power.

This coming deliverance is mentioned particularly in the prophecy of Zechariah, as follows:—"Behold, the day of the Lord cometh and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled and the women ravished. And half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations as when he fought in the day of battle [the ancient time when the Lord worked miracles for Israel's deliverance as at Midian]. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives."—Zech. 14:1-4.

The fifth verse seems to be more intelligently rendered in the Revised Version thus: "For all the armor of the armed man in the tumult, and the garments rolled in blood, shall even be for burning, for fuel of fire." The thought seems to be that at that time will come the end of warfare, as the Scriptures have declared. The time of trouble with which the Millennium will be introduced will be the means by which the Lord will overthrow all the powers of evil, as it is written, "He shall cause wars to cease unto the ends of the earth." Under the righteous reign which will then follow men will learn war no more, but will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. At the present time the reverse of all this is in operation, nor can we hope for a change such as the Lord's Word here and elsewhere predicts by any other power than that from above. Hence our prayer as our Lord instructed and in harmony with our hopes, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

THE GOVERNMENT UPON HIS SHOULDERS

As the verses three to five indicate the coming joys and blessings and cessation of war, verse six points out how this would be accomplished. This is shown by its introduction with the word "for." This verse is the Golden Text of our lesson, its center, its pivot point. It goes back of the promised blessings to point out how they will be introduced. (1) A child will be born—a son will be given—a gift from God. (2) Passing over his earthly ministry and faithfulness, whereby the Lord Jesus was tested and proven worthy of the favors here prophetically assured him as the overcomer, we have the declaration

that the government will be upon his shoulders. This is an old-style figurative way of declaring that the authority and honor will be laid upon the Lord Jesus. The same thought is still carried out in the armies of the world, whose generals have upon their shoulders epaulets in which the dignity of their rank is noted, is indicated. So upon our Lord Jesus the heavenly Father has placed the dignity and responsibility of being the great King who in due time, as the Father's representative, as the great glorified Mediator, shall reign for a thousand years to restore order in the world, to put down all insubordination, to destroy every enemy of righteousness and truth and to exalt every one who is the friend of these divine principles.

It is worthy of note that this authority or government is conferred upon our Lord before he assumes the various offices subsequently made: remarkably few recognize the authority of this great Captain of our salvation whom God has set forth. Only comparatively few recognize him truly and render him obedience and refuse not him who speaketh from heaven. These few have the eyes of their understanding opened and see what the others do not see, and the ears of their understanding opened that they hear and comprehend what others do not comprehend. To them the Master is the Father's representative and all in all even now—even before the time has come for him to take his great power and reign, even before he has established truth and righteousness in the world. By the eye of faith they see him, recognize him, worship, adore, obey and follow him.

KNOWLEDGE OF HIS GLORY WORLD-WIDE

But our lesson implies much more than such an acknowledgment of our Lord Jesus by the church. It implies a world-wide knowledge, as it is written, "Unto him every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess, to the glory of God the Father." The government or authority is not laid upon his shoulders in vain, and the fact that he has not exercised this authority in now nearly two thousand years' triumph and ascension up on high is merely in accord with the scriptural declaration that the Father has a due time set at which the Son shall take unto himself his great power and reign, and in association with himself the church, the little flock, now being gathered out from the world during this Gospel age.

The time when the Lord shall manifest to the world his government, his authority, his rule, is represented in Daniel 12:1, 2, by the words, "stand up." "At that time shall Michael [another name for our glorious Lord] stand up, and there shall be a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one found written in the book." Our Lord will not have the authority in vain. When he shall have the authority he will use it, and one of the first works, we are assured, will be the suppression of evil—not only the suppression of Satan, the prince of this world, who now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience, and who, we are assured, will be bound at the beginning of that Millennial reign, but additionally all the works of the devil, all institutions of evil, moral, social, financial, that are now injuring the world of mankind and co-operating in effecting the groaning and travailing of the whole creation. All these will be suppressed as soon as the proper time shall come, and he upon whose shoulders the power and authority have been placed shall take unto himself his great power and shall begin his reign. No longer, we may be sure, will any evil be licensed; no longer will the making of spirituous liquors be permitted, authorized and licensed, nor the sale of these nor any other harmful thing be allowed to do injury in God's holy kingdom.—Isa. 11:9.

It will be then, at that time, that the whole world shall begin to recognize the great King whom God will thus set in the throne of the world's dominion to rule it, to order it, to subdue it, to lift it up out of sin and degradation and to bring it into harmony again with God as it was before sin entered.

"COUNSELLOR," MIGHTY ONE, FATHER

The great Mediator, the Christ, "Prophet, Priest and King," Judge, the Seed of Abraham in whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed, shall have various names; his character and work shall be recognized from various standpoints. He will be the Wonderful in that in himself he will manifest more than others the Father's character and likeness and nature; he will be Counsellor, Teacher, Instructor, Helper, Guide, for the whole world of mankind; he will be Mighty God—the one with all power and authority to deal with mankind throughout the Millennial age.

There will be no appeal from his righteous laws, regulations and decisions, because the Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son: the whole matter will be left in his hands. From another standpoint he will be the Everlasting Father: having purchased the life of Adam and his race with the sacrifice of his own human life, our Lord having been granted a new life in his resurrection, will have at his disposal the life which