

things and I have rest about the matter when I realize after careful thought and prayer that by subscribing to the Vow I am doing his holy will. I have always appreciated the Morning Resolve. If the V. D. M. questions were being answered by me now I believe I would give more care to the work, yet I think on the whole the answers were very close to the truth. I shall sign and date separate slip for attachment to Vow form, or you can return me the slip itself and I will sign it.

I have deeply appreciated the article, "The Price of Exaltation" in Nov. 15th WATCH TOWER. It is clear evidence to me the Lord is still at the helm.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

J. R. DOUGLAS.—Aus.

APPRECIATES FREE PRESS AND SPEECH

DEAR SIR:—

My attention has been called through a news item to a book published by you called "The Finished Mystery," which the Canadian press censor proscribed as pro-German.

If there is no law in this country against your supplying the book, please let me know its price. Catalogue of other publications of yours would be appreciated.

As I understand it, a free press is one of the fundamentals upon which this government is based. I like to see for myself why certain books and publications are so greatly feared by the ruling class. Thus far I have usually found that there is some unpleasant truth which they hope by these tyrannical and undemocratic methods to suppress. All autocrats hate to let the people do their thinking. I believe that nothing that could be done would do more to create dissatisfaction and unrest in a country supposedly free than to attempt autocratically to say what the people shall be allowed to read or not read.

I am far from being a pro-German, but I pride myself on being a free and independent American, and nothing stirs me more than to see efforts made to suppress free speech, free press and free assembly.

Sincerely,

F. H. S.—N. Y.

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No. 9

ZION'S TRIUMPH NEAR

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

With bated breath and joyful heart the watchers in Zion behold the closing of the harvest. Next the dark night, followed shortly by the glorious sunburst of everlasting happiness. Wonderful is the present privilege of the faithful watchers. The graduating test is now upon the church.

By the words of our text St. Paul clearly proves that patience (cheerful endurance) is the final test, and that this test must come after we have done the will of God. What, then, has been and is the will of God for the members of Zion in the closing days of the age? During the past forty years the harvest of the age has been in progress. That the harvest began in 1878, there is ample and convincing proof. The end of the harvest is due in the spring of 1918. During the period of the harvest the will of God concerning his people finds expression in the words of the Master: "In the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn." (Matthew 13:30) In that time, according to his word, he has sent forth his messengers with a great sound of a trumpet, to gather his elect from one end of heaven to the other. (Matthew 24:31) Again God expressed his will concerning his people, saying, "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." (Psalm 50:5) Again Jesus expressed the will of our Father: "Thrust in thy sickle and reap; for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth [order-loving people] is ripe."—Revelation 14:15.

The sickle here mentioned is the message of truth; thrusting it in means to send out the truth to those who hunger for it. Again God expressed his will concerning the called ones when he commissioned them to preach the good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God (Isaiah 61:1-3); and that this vengeance should be declared against Babylon. (Jeremiah 51:6) Jesus makes it clear that the latter part of the work of the harvest is the gathering of the vine of the earth. (Revelation 14:18) If, then, we see these things fulfilled and we have joyfully participated in the work of their fulfillment, we have been doing the will of God; and it is after thus doing his will that we must cheerfully endure before receiving the promise.

HOW FULFILLED

It is doubtless true that every saint this side the veil who has a knowledge of present truth came to such knowledge of God's plan since 1878—the opening of the harvest work. At that time the church nominal was composed of both wheat and tares, true and false Christians. During the time of the harvest these classes must be separated. In outward appearance the two are much alike. The great Master had personally instructed that there should be no attempt at separation until the harvest time.

He himself has been present, directing the work of separating the two classes; and he has used various consecrated instruments as his messengers to do this work. The separating and gathering work has been accomplished with a sickle, which is the message of truth, and which necessarily must be understood by the consecrated. The thrusting in of that

sickle of truth has had the effect of causing all denominations or religious systems to bind themselves together in bundles; thus uniting to oppose the message of truth. This binding together in bundles, according to the parable, must take place before the destruction of the tares. That these bundles have for some time been bound together cannot be gainsaid. The tacit union of the systems is complete, all together composing Babylon, mother and daughters. The doom of Babylon is sealed and has been announced. God has smitten her with plagues (Revelation 16:20, 21); and her destruction will follow shortly.

SEALING OF THE SAINTS

During the entire forty years of the harvest the sealing of the saints progressed. A knowledge and appreciation of God's plan has served as both a sealing and a separating agency. To those who hungered and thirsted for the truth, God gave the satisfying portion; and those who appreciated it have been prompt in doing his will concerning them by gladly engaging in the harvest work. These heard the call, "Come out of Babylon," and joyfully obeyed, took up the trumpet and engaged in sounding forth the message of the kingdom.

The great Master of the harvest, through St. John, shows that this sealing is in the forehead and must be accomplished before the storm of destruction breaks upon Babylon. This seems clearly to indicate that every one who will be of the kingdom class must have a knowledge and appreciation of God's plan by the end of the harvest. If the harvest has ended, then the sealing is complete. The evidence strongly indicates that all the saints are sealed. This would mean that all the saints have been gathered into the "barn"—into the condition of separateness from the world.

Concerning this point, the Laodicean messenger wrote:

"When this night cometh, when the reapers must cease their labors, it will prove that this final work of the Gospel age is accomplished; that the elect number of the bride of Christ have all been 'sealed,' and 'gathered' into a condition of separateness from the worldly—into the barn condition; for God will not permit anything to put an end to his work until it is finished. Then all the true and faithful servants of God will have been sealed in their foreheads; and, the work of the Gospel age being finished, no more can enter into that work or reap its rich reward."—C 211, 212.

"The forehead sealing indicates that a mental comprehension of the truth will be the mark of seal which will separate and distinguish the servants of God from the servants and votaries of Babylon. And this agrees with Daniel's testimony: 'The wise [of thy people] shall understand; but none of the wicked [unfaithful to their covenant] shall understand.' (Daniel 12:10) Thus the classes are to be marked and separated before the plagues come upon rejected, cast-off Babylon."—C 165, 166.

PLAGUE OF HAIL

It has heretofore been shown (Z. 1918-119) that the first-born of Egypt pictured or represented the clergy of Christendom, claiming to be the first ones of importance in the systems. The exposition of the prophecies of Ezekiel and Revelation in "The Finished Mystery" shows to the world that the

clergy are not what they have claimed and think themselves to be. **THE BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY** which contains the article on "The Fall of Babylon" is likewise a pointed message directed against the same class. In the picture, the angel that smote the first-born of Egypt passed through the land about midnight; and, as heretofore suggested in **THE WATCH TOWER**, "about midnight" in the antitype would apply to about January 1, 1918. On December 30 and 31, 1917, and January 1, 1918, approximately 10,000,000 copies of the above mentioned issue of **THE BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY**—the message against Babylon, and particularly the clergy of Babylon—were placed in the homes of the people of the United States and Canada. This was like a great hailstorm, and brought to the attention of the people the fact that Babylon is not what she claims to be. Nothing has so angered Babylon as this. Twenty-seven years before that "hailstorm," the Laodicean messenger wrote:

"After the truth, which Babylon now begins to regard as her enemy, and as calculated to accomplish her destruction, shall have become more generally known and widely circulated; after 'the hail' has to a considerable extent swept away the refuge of lies; and after the now smoldering and menacing hatred of the truth is thereby roused to an opposition so violent and so general as to effectually stop the further progress of the great work in which the saints are engaged," will be "the approximate time of the deliverance or 'change' of the last members of the body of Christ."—C 231, 232.

MANTLE OF ELIJAH

After Elijah smote the Jordan with his mantle, he crossed over with Elisha; and while the two walked together on the other side, Elijah was taken up by a whirlwind into heaven. Elisha then took up the mantle of Elijah, that had fallen from him, and went back over the Jordan. It seems quite reasonable that the mantle represented the message of truth which the Elijah class has possessed throughout its journey during the harvest period. (Psalm 91:4) Elijah had this mantle with him all the way from Gilgal to the Jordan. Elijah and Elisha stood at the Jordan, talking; then Elijah wrapped up his mantle and smote the waters. This seems to explain the waiting period from 1914 to 1917, when the smiting of the antitypical Jordan began by the message "wrapped up for the slaughter." (Ezekiel 21:15) "The Finished Mystery" contains the message of truth in brief, compact form, specially directed against Babylon. It was used particularly from the latter part of 1917 to the spring of 1918.

About the middle of March, 1918, the distribution of "The Finished Mystery" was suddenly stopped. The suggestion does not seem unreasonable that, "The Finished Mystery" being the mantle, the quantity of these printed and not distributed will be used by the Elisha class for a second smiting of the waters (peoples).

HAS THE HARVEST ENDED?

The saints need not be disturbed by the suppression of the message against Babylon. This is not man's work, but the Lord's work. God has permitted it to be interrupted for some good purpose and will overrule it to his own glory. "The Finished Mystery" has been suppressed on the theory that it interferes with the prosecution of the war. (Jeremiah 38:4) Doubtless the clergy have represented to officials that it is interfering with the war. We cannot agree that the circulation of this book in any manner interferes with the war's prosecution. Those having to do with its distribution have had no intention whatsoever to interfere with the prosecution of the war. Something, however, must interfere with the harvest work. Excessive use of authority may be expected in this time of stress. In many places, petty officials of the law have arrested, without warrant, some of the faithful Colporteur brethren; have thrown them into jail and refused to give them opportunity to arrange for bail; and after several days have turned them loose with the warning that they should not sell any of the **STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES** or any publications of the Society. Undoubtedly officials have thought it absolutely necessary to suppress this message. The Scriptures indicate that such a course would be taken. In 1891, the faithful messenger of Laodicea, discussing this point said:

"When repressive, restrictive and coercive measures are thought to be necessary, such measures will probably include not only labor organizations and the publications which advocate their rights and wrongs, but also such others as point out the plan of God, and the real cause and only remedy for the great distress of the nations. Yes, the time is probably not many years distant, when repressive measures may be brought to bear against every effort of the saints to spread the good

news of the coming kingdom, all on the plea that the general interests and the public welfare demand such a course.

"Thus would be fulfilled the predictions of the Second Psalm, and probably in the end with more bitterness than can now well be imagined, though it has been partially fulfilled upon the Head of the body.—Acts 4:25-29.

"The same necessity for restricting liberty on political and social questions will probably be supposed to apply equally to freedom of expression on religious questions which really lies at the foundation of all liberty. It would not be surprising if a 'strong government' would some day replace this present great republic; and it is entirely probable that one common standard of religious belief will be deemed expedient and will be promulgated, to teach outside of which will be treated and punished as a political offense. Such a persecution would not only furnish, in the end or harvest of this age, another parallel to the harvest of the Jewish age, but would also give a wider and deeper significance to the words of the Apostles Paul and John, and to the typical illustrations of the close of the earthly career of the true church, as represented in Elijah's whirlwind departure and John the Baptist's imprisonment and beheading."—B 263, 264.

THE DOOR CLOSING

The door which by the way, our Lord calls a gate—represents the way of entrance into a certain condition or privilege. (Luke 13:24, 25) In this instance it represents entrance into the race for the prize of the heavenly calling to joint-heirship with Christ Jesus in his kingdom. That door opened at Pentecost. It must be closed some time. It must remain open until all the "wise virgins" have been sealed in their foreheads. While open, it means that those who enter have the blessed privilege of sacrificing and suffering with Christ Jesus, which suffering is not ordinary suffering, but such suffering as results from faithfully walking in the footsteps of the Master in loving devotion to the cause of righteousness, and in joyfully defending the truth, which is unpopular, and in exposing errors which are popular. It means a zealous and energetic promulgation of the truth as we have opportunity, at all hazards. It means to be true, loyal and faithful to the Lord under all conditions, even unto death. Such privileges are the greatest ever afforded to any creature. The ceasing of such privileges to any and all persons would seem to mark definitely the closing of the door. "The night cometh when no man can work." (John 9:4) That time will mark the closing of the door. Discussing this point, the last messenger to the church said:

"There are three ways in which the closing of this door might be indicated: first, by a definite Bible statement of the exact date; second, by such a reversal of public sentiment with reference to the truth that fidelity and zeal in its service would no longer meet with opposition, and when suffering with Christ for the truth's sake, would be no longer possible; or third, by such a condition of affairs obtaining in the world that all opportunity for such service would be effectually obstructed, thus leaving no opportunities for candidates to enter into the work and to develop and prove their love and faithfulness by their activity and endurance. . . . We have a clear intimation that the door will be shut in the manner last named; for, before the Millennial day breaks, we are forewarned of a dark night wherein no man can labor."—C 207, 208.

"The closing of the 'door,' in the parable of Matthew 25, marks the full end of all opportunity for any, even of the 'called' ones, thereafter to attain the prize of the high calling. It marks the end of all opportunity to prove worthy of the prize by faithfulness in the service: all opportunity for service will there terminate in the 'night' wherein no man can work."—C 213.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

"The morning cometh, and also the night." "The night cometh when no man can work." When that is true, you may know that 'the door is shut,' that all the wise virgins have entered in, that all have been proved, and that all vacancies have been acceptably filled."—C 225.

"Ere long our work will be cut short—gradually at first, and then completely and finally, when 'the night cometh, when no man can work.' And the gloom of that 'night' will be dispelled only by the Millennial sunrise. When our work is done, and that night closes in around us, we may expect not only to see the storm-clouds grow much darker, but also to hear and to feel the rising 'winds' which will culminate in a wild hurricane of human passion—a whirlwind of trouble. Then, having finished our appointed work, it will be our part to 'stand,' patiently, until our 'change' comes."—C 230.

We record here some of the trying experiences through

which our brethren are caused to pass because of their faithfulness to the Lord. About the 14th day of March, the Attorney General instructed the District Attorneys throughout the country to prevent the further sale and distribution of "The Finished Mystery," but to arrest no one who had sold or distributed the book prior to that date without wrongful intent. Notwithstanding this order, local Government officials in different places have exceeded their authority. Some of the dear friends have been arrested and thrown into jail for distributing THE BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY, others because they were selling the first six volumes of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES; others, because they sold the Scenario of the Photo-Drama of Creation. Two were arrested and brought into court because they had distributed the KINGDOM NEWS. After their incarceration, some one induced a woman to make a false affidavit against one of them. When the case was heard, the affidavit was proven to be false and both brethren were released.

REPORTS FROM THE FRIENDS

Following are a few extracts from letters such as have been received here every day during the past few weeks:

"_____ County Jail. In harmony with the Lord's will, I am having a quiet season of study and fellowship with him here."—Conn.

"_____ Jail. We shall be taken from here by an officer to the District Attorney's office for distributing KINGDOM NEWS."—N. Y.

"Your telegram received yesterday in the _____ Jail. They turned us loose yesterday, after keeping us four days and five nights, making us promise to quit selling any of the STUDIES in _____ County before they would release us. As the people are so stirred up there, we thought best to take up the work in the new territory in Illinois."—Ind.

"We are experiencing considerable opposition. Thursday four sisters went to a neighboring town and distributed THE BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY—'Clergy Ordination Proved Fraudulent.' Just as they got through with the distribution, the city marshal, with another, insisted that they go and gather the tracts up, and then they had a public burning."—Ill.

"Sheriff's Office. Last night I was placed in jail here for selling 'The Finished Mystery.'"—N. Dak.

"Last Saturday I went to _____ to attend the trial of two Colporteurs, and, while looking for them, was arrested. They could not prove that I had circulated any of the books since the ruling was made."—Okla.

"While busily engaged in cutting out the pages objected to [in "The Finished Mystery"], an officer of the federal government arrested us. My request to show me his warrant was completely ignored. We were conveyed to the police station and no one was allowed to communicate with us. From the press account, next morning, I learned that two of my friends came to bail me out, but were not allowed to see us at all. After spending several nights in jail, we were released without any explanation whatsoever. Two people told me that the officer gave them several books, with instructions to burn them when they had finished reading them."—Ia.

"We are undergoing great persecution while trying to do colporteur work. The officers are gathering up all the Seventh Volumes and the question booklets; also THE BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY, 'The Fall of Babylon.' We have been working some with the other volumes and the Scenario and booklets; but hear threats of arrest every day."—Tex.

"_____ County Jail. There are three brothers and myself in jail here for selling 'The Finished Mystery.' We are rejoicing that we have a share in drinking the Lord's cup."—Calif.

"At _____ my brother and I were stopped from selling the six volumes of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES by a secret service man. He told us if we tried to sell any more books we would be arrested. We were not selling any Seventh Volumes."—Wash.

In Texas two of the pilgrims have been arrested for preaching the Gospel, one of them being held in \$10,000 bond for appearance before the Grand Jury. Another of our traveling ministers was waited upon by the mayor and chief of police in a western town and warned not to preach. When he attempted to do so, a mob chased him out of town, but captured his companion and tarred him. The governor co-operated to furnish protection. This mob violence indicates that the demons are loose and inhabiting the minds of men, inciting them to lawless deeds.

DEMONS LOOSE

St. John the Revelator wrote: "And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God; and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt

not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." (Revelation 7:2, 3) The conclusion to be drawn from this is that the demons will be loosed when the saints are sealed and the door is closed. The Scriptures clearly show that the demons will inhabit Babylon. (Revelation 18:2) It is reasonable to conclude that, after being loosed, some little time might be occupied by the demons in influencing the minds of the willing ones in Babylon and in the formulation of plans for operation against the last members of the body of Christ, and that during that time the saints would be concluding their work. These demons will inhabit the members of Babylon by taking control of the body and mind, as in the days of Noah. They will probably first vent their spleen or vengeance upon the members of the kingdom class.

Conditions which have recently developed in Russia strongly indicate that the evil spirits are loose. It is well known that the czar of Russia consulted the demons through mediums. The violent disposition recently manifested by the clergy toward some of our brethren indicates that the demons are occupying their minds. We may expect this violence to increase in the near future. Let us not be surprised if within a short time every avenue for the promulgation of the truth is closed.

A BRIEF RESPITE

We need not be at all disturbed because the opportunity to distribute "The Finished Mystery" has been taken from us. The work is the Lord's. Our business, as his ambassadors, is to deliver the message. In the days to come the clergy will not be heard to say that they did not have opportunity to know of this message. This message must be delivered to Babylon. Only the faithful will engage in delivering it. If you have had any opportunity to do so, rejoice and give thanks to the Lord. The fiery chariot that took away Elijah represents the fiery experiences that would come to the faithful ones who persist in making proclamations of the message of the kingdom, and who are anxious to enter the fiery chariot and be taken home in the Lord's own due time.

Some, when seeing these fiery experiences—the fiery chariot—appearing, have sought a place of safety by ceasing their labors in the harvest field and by refusing to speak anything concerning Babylon, declining even to mention it in class study. It seems that this shows a lack of faith in the Lord. Let us have in mind the Apostle's words: "Now the just [the justified, having the robe of Christ's righteousness] shall live by his faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." (Hebrews 10:38) This is the time above all times to stand firm and trust in the Lord. Even though we see the persecution becoming more violent day by day, because of our faithfulness, let us keep in mind that he who is on our part is greater than all that can be against us. Let us not waver. Let us proceed in the declaration of the message of the kingdom as long as the Lord gives us any opportunities. "And probably at this juncture the Elijah class, persisting in declaring the truth to the last, will suffer violence, pass into glory and escape from the severest features of the great time of trouble."—C 231.

The Lord has permitted some of his people to remain to this time in order to leave records concerning his kingdom that will be valuable to the undeveloped great company class and to the world in general. It therefore becomes the privilege of all the consecrated, as opportunity offers, to make proclamation of the message of the kingdom. The time is short. Let every one be active. Let every one who is able to give a public address, and who can find an opportunity, do so, using the subject, "The World Has Ended—Millions Now Living Will Never Die." It is a great privilege to announce this message of the kingdom to the poor world in this hour of distress. If we are privileged to be the very last ones on the earth to do this, such will be a great honor. "To be among those who remain is no dishonor; and to be the very last one of those to be 'changed' will be no discredit. Several Scriptures show that there is a special work for the last members of the body to do on this side the veil, as important and as essentially a part of kingdom work as that of the glorified members on the other side."—C 235.

SPECIAL WORK

Seeing, then, that some avenues of service are closing, let us look quickly for some other avenue remaining open. Soon all will close. Gradually the work will close down, and then suddenly will stop completely. But let us remember that the feet members—the last members—have some work to do even yet.

"The mission of the feet, which is no insignificant part of the kingdom work, will be accomplished. Though their message is popularly hated and discredited and they are despised

by the world as fools (for Christ's sake)—as all his faithful servants have been throughout the Gospel age—yet, before they are all 'changed' and joined to the glorified members beyond the veil, they, as agents of the kingdom, will have left such records of that kingdom and its present and future work as will be most valuable information to the world and to the undeveloped and over-charged children of God who, though consecrated to God, will have failed so to run as to obtain the prize of our high calling.

"And let it not be forgotten that all who are of the 'feet' will be thus engaged in publishing these good tidings and in saying to Zion, 'Thy God reigneth!'—the kingdom of Christ is begun! And all who are true watchmen can at this time see clearly, as one man, and can together harmoniously sing the song of Moses and the Lamb."—C 237.

Keeping always in mind the great honor conferred upon us by being granted the opportunity to make proclamation of the kingdom, and also by faith beholding the glories of the kingdom in full operation, our faith will be strong and we will keep our faces to the enemy and valiantly press on. Plainly we can see the disintegration of the present order. Let us rejoice to proclaim to the peoples of earth the blessings of the great King, who has come to reign and bring righteousness in the earth. Long ago the prophet of the Lord, beholding the privilege now enjoyed by the last members of the body of Christ on earth, in ecstasy exclaimed: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"—Isaiah 52:7.

PATIENCE PERFECTING HER WORK

Let no one slack his hand as long as any opportunity for proclaiming the truth is afforded. Remember the words of the Apostle: "Ye have need of patience [cheerful endurance], that after ye have done the will of God ye might receive the promise." The will of God is that we do all in our power to give testimony to his glorious character and coming kingdom. Having done this, we must wait and behold the salvation of the Lord, patiently biding his time to call us home. The Apostle Paul, again speaking to the church, says: "Having done all, stand." (Ephesians 6:13) This clearly indicates that the last of the feet members must stand a while after the door is closed, stand, letting patience perfect her work; waiting until the Lord Jehovah shall deliver us. Some will be required to stand in enforced idleness for a time, despised and rejected of all men, deprived of opportunities to labor either for the production of the necessities of life or in testifying of the kingdom. Let us remember in this connection the words of the Master: "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." (Matthew 24:13) Nearly twenty years ago, the faithful Laodicean messenger wrote:

"How long the Lord may be pleased to let his saints stand in enforced idleness so far as his work is concerned, we do not know, but probably only long enough to let faith and patience have their perfect work. Here these virtues will be

most fully developed, tested and manifested. This test of patience will be the final trial of the church. Then 'God will help her, at the dawning of [her] morning.' (Psalm 46:5—Leeser)—not the morning which is to dawn on the world at the brightness of her rising with her Lord as the sun of righteousness, but at the dawning of her morning, in which she is to be changed to the nature and likeness of her Lord. Her morning is to precede the Millennial morning."—C 230, 231.

TRIUMPHANT ZION

Having made a consecration unto death, the child of God understands that he must die before he can gain the promised prize. "Ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes." (Psalm 82:7) The journey of the consecrated has not been one strewn with flowers. It has not been one of ease. God permitted it to be otherwise, in order that by trying experiences a strong, firm, crystalized character might be developed. The last of the feet members have come to a very trying time in the church's history. Poor, bruised and despised ones; misunderstood by all in the world, persecuted, ridiculed, the victims of scoffers, charged as violators of the law and denounced as the offscourings of the earth. And yet they have pressed along and are still pressing along the narrow way! No one appreciates them; indeed, none except the consecrated can appreciate them. But how beautiful they are and how wonderful their privilege! They are highly honored and esteemed by the Lord himself and greatly loved by him—not because of their own merit, but because of faithful, loving devotion to duty and to his cause. They are now performing their precious mission of proclaiming that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. A little while, and their journey will be ended, and their "change" shall suddenly come. And that "change" will bring them into fellowship and glory and power already possessed by those who have preceded them into glory.

Of the last members, St. Paul says: "They shall be caught away to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall they ever be with the Lord." The term "caught away" is rendered "removed by force" by some translators. It seems that some of the Lord's dear saints may go down into the very anarchy, yet at all times protected by the Lord. When the true church's hour seems the darkest, then God will help her. She will emerge from the turmoil and distress of earth into glory and beauty, in the likeness of her Lord and Head. Triumphant Zion she then shall be. Thus will God help Zion in the dawning of her morning—in the morning of the eternal day of Christ's triumph.

"Triumphant Zion, lift thy head
From dust and darkness and the dead!
Though humbled long, awake at length,
And gird thee with thy Savior's strength.

"Yea, soon astonished men shall see
The laurels of thy victory;
And thou, with grace and glory crowned,
May'st lavish blessings all around."

JESUS TRIUMPHANT OVER DEATH

JUNE 23.—MARK 16:1-11.

IMPORTANCE OF OUR LORD'S RESURRECTION—ERRORS OF DARK AGES LEAD TO CONFUSION IN MANY MINDS—PROOFS OF THE RESURRECTION NUMEROUS AND WELL SUBSTANTIATED—THE WITNESSES MOST RELIABLE—OUR LORD'S RESURRECTION CHANGE—PURPOSE OF HIS VARIOUS APPEARANCES IN DIFFERENT BODIES OF FLESH—HIS EXALTATION "FAR ABOVE ANGELS, PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS, AND EVERY NAME THAT IS NAMED"—HIS GREAT REWARD.

"Now hath Christ been raised from the dead."—1 Corinthians 15:20.

Few seem to realize the importance of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, its bearing upon the entire Gospel message. The Apostle indicates how much depended upon our Lord's resurrection when he wrote: "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. . . . They also who are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." (1 Corinthians 15:14, 18) The number of the Lord's professed followers, both clergy and laity, who fail to appreciate the resurrection, yea, who actually do not believe in it, is very large. The number of those who really believe in it is very small.

Under the teachings which have come down to us from the dark ages, the majority of professed Christians fail entirely to realize that death means a cessation of life, as the Scriptures clearly teach. On the contrary the masses of Christendom have come to believe that there is no death, that the dead are more alive than they were before they died. Applying this erroneous thought to our Lord, as well as to others, they do not appreciate the Scriptural declaration that "Christ died for our sins and rose again on the third day." They think

of him as being alive during that time, and that it was merely his fleshly body that was inanimate in the tomb, and that the resurrection which occurred on the third day was not his resurrection to life, but merely the reanimation of his dead body.

Confused thus by the errors of medieval times, which were also adopted by the reformers and which are engrafted upon the minds of the civilized world today, the great majority of Christian people cannot appreciate the Scriptural declarations in respect to the importance of the resurrection of our Lord. Instead of believing the Apostle's assertion that our faith is vain, our preaching vain, if Jesus did not rise from the dead, the majority of Christendom would be inclined to say just the reverse of this. Hence only those who realize that the dead are dead, that until awakened from the sleep of death they can have no conscious existence—only these can really appreciate the importance of the resurrection.

CONFUSION THE RESULT OF ERROR

Some one may ask: "What difference would it make to our beloved dead, what difference would it make to our preach-

ing, what difference would it make to our faith, if Jesus had been left in the tomb?" We reply: If Jesus had not been raised from the dead we would have had no basis for the preaching of the Gospel; for the Gospel message is that by the grace of God the death of our Lord Jesus provided the ransom-price for father Adam and his posterity, and that therefore in God's appointed time Adam and all his posterity will be released from the death sentence and be brought back to the original perfection of nature lost in Eden. Christ Jesus as the great King of earth is to establish the kingdom of God in the earth, and through it to lift from mankind the burden, the penalty of death. All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and come forth to the glorious opportunities of the Millennial kingdom, opportunities for reconciliation with God and for release from all the imperfections and weaknesses resulting from Adam's fall from perfection.

With the fact before us that Jesus had died, but without any proof of his resurrection, the preaching of any such gospel would be vain preaching, foolish preaching, deception of the people. To believe such a gospel under such circumstances would be to brand ourselves as simpletons; and to have any hope that our dead friends could ever be benefited by a dead Christ would be absurd.

Seeing, then, that every feature of the Gospel is dependent upon the great fact of our Lord's resurrection, we understand why it was that the apostles based everything upon the fact that Jesus not only died for our sins as our ransom-price, but also arose from the dead for our justification, for our deliverance from the sentence, the guilt, the penalty, that is upon the human family—the death penalty. No wonder that our Heavenly Father arranged that we should have so explicit an account, so detailed a statement, of everything pertaining to our Lord's resurrection! No wonder that the Evangelists recorded matters with such minuteness! No wonder that in all the preaching of the apostles this great fundamental truth, which was the basis of their own faith toward God, was set before the church as being all important! From this viewpoint the lesson for today must be of deep interest to all of the Lord's people for all time, until the outward manifestations of the kingdom shall attest the things which the household of faith must now accept by faith.

PROOFS OF THE RESURRECTION

Summing up the proofs that our Lord arose from the dead on the third day we find that they are numerous and well substantiated, as follows:

(1) Our Lord's death could not have been a case of suspended animation. The spear-thrust made this fact evident, not only because it was a mortal wound, but because it furnished proof that our Lord was already dead, for water as well as coagulated blood issued from his side.

(2) The centurion charged with the execution was convinced of his death, and so reported to Pilate, the Roman governor.

(3) The request of the chief priests that the stone against the door of the sepulcher be sealed and a guard be placed around the tomb, so that no one could remove the body and then pretend that he had risen, was a further evidence that Jesus was dead.

(4) His friends believed that he was dead, and wrapped him in spices for burial. Indeed, in their grief they seem to have forgotten his promise of a resurrection, so much so that even after he had arisen it was with difficulty that they were convinced of the fact.

(5) The record that the guards dissembled and declared that the disciples stole Jesus' body while the soldiers slept, being bribed by the Jewish rulers, served at least to prove that the guard had been set and that everybody recognized that Jesus was dead.

(6) The tomb in which Jesus was buried was a new one, in which no one had previously been buried, so there could be no doubt as to the identity of the one who arose. We are glad that there is such satisfactory evidence that Christ died, and that thus we have further foundation for the Scriptural assurance that he died as man's Redeemer.

TWO VIEWS OF THE RESURRECTION

The view held by the majority of Christian people is that our Lord arose from the dead to exactly the same conditions that he had during his life upon earth—a man, subject to the same limitations that he had before he died. The other view is that he arose from the dead a spirit being; but that since spirit beings cannot be seen by the human eye without injury, our Lord clothed himself, as it were, with flesh and clothing in order to be seen by his followers, to demonstrate to them that he was no longer dead. The latter we find to be the Scriptural view.

The majority of Christian people are greatly confused over the matter of the resurrection; for they believe the doctrines received from heathen philosophy during the dark ages, the very same doctrines which were communicated by the devil to all the heathen, namely, that the dead are more alive than they were during their life-time. Consequently people often wonder why the Scriptures lay such stress upon the resurrection and why there should be any necessity for a resurrection. They properly enough reason that if, as they are usually told at the time of the funeral, their dead friend is now "free, no longer trammelled with his earthly body," why need he be trammelled with it in the future any more than in the present, and if some have gotten along for centuries without bodies, why should they need bodies thereafter any more than before?

All this confusion of thought is directly traceable to Satan's falsehood, "Ye shall not surely [really] die," and the rejection of God's statement, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." (Genesis 3:4; 2:17) When we accept the teachings of the Word of God that the dead are really dead, then we perceive that there is no hope whatever for them to have any knowledge or consciousness except by a resurrection. Then we realize the truthfulness of the Scriptural statement that there is neither knowledge nor device nor wisdom in the grave, sheol, the death state, whither all go.—Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10; Job 14:21; Psalm 146:4.

The cause of popular confusion on this subject is due to the error of supposing that the dead are not dead, and to the failure to see that our Lord was "put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit," as the Apostle Peter explicitly tells us. (1 Peter 3:18) Thank God that with the morning light now shining upon the divine record these shadows, so confusing to heart and mind, are gradually fleeing away, disclosing to us new beauties in our heavenly Father's Word, consistencies, harmonies! When permitted to interpret themselves, the Scriptures are beautiful, reasonable, irrefutable.

A COMMON BUT GROSS ERROR

The Apostle Peter informs us that Christ was "put to death in flesh, but quickened in spirit," as we have said. These words being true (we give a literal translation), those who declare that our Lord arose from the dead a fleshly being are grossly in error. Indeed, it is evident that they have misconceived the entire subject of the atonement; for if our Lord, as the man Christ Jesus, gave himself a ransom, he could not be restored to manhood in a resurrection without annulling the ransom—taking back the price he had provided for the sin of the world. The Scriptural thought is that as man had sinned and been sentenced to death, it was necessary that the Redeemer become a man and give his manhood as the ransom-price for Adam and his race. Moreover, the Scriptural declaration is not that this ransom-price was taken back, but that God raised our Lord from the dead a new creature of a new nature, not in flesh, not in human nature, but in spirit, a spirit being.

St. Paul agrees with St. Peter's testimony, that Jesus was quickened in spirit, saying that Jesus was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." (Romans 1:4) Again, he says in describing the first resurrection: "Thus also is the resurrection of the dead: it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural [animal] body, it is raised a spiritual body." (1 Corinthians 15:42-45) Elsewhere he declares that the church's highest ambition is to be a partaker in this first resurrection, which he denominates "his resurrection," the Christ-resurrection, the resurrection to spirit conditions, nature, which came first to our Lord and in which all of his body, the church, will have a share.—Philippians 3:10; Revelation 20:6.

OUR LORD'S RESURRECTION CHANGE

This being true, we know that the time when our Lord received his spirit body was at his resurrection and not subsequently. Speaking of our Lord's humiliation and his subsequent exaltation at his resurrection, St. Paul assures us that Jesus left the glory which he had with the Father and humbled himself to become a man; and that in due time he humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross. "Wherefore God hath highly exalted him and given him a name above every name." The exaltation came to him in his resurrection change. It was true of him then, as in due time it will be true of all the members of his body, that he was sown in weakness, raised in power; sown a natural [animal, human] body, raised a spirit body.

This spiritual body was just as glorious in the moment of our Lord's resurrection as it was at any subsequent time. It

had all the powers properly granted to spirit beings in harmony with Jehovah God. He was not, as previously, the man Christ Jesus merely, but the Lord of glory. As such he was able to associate himself with his disciples, either visibly or invisibly, to appear as a gardener, as a traveler, as a stranger on Galilee's shore, or in any manner he might see fit. He was the same glorious being who subsequently appeared to Saul of Tarsus, shining as the lightning, much as the angel appeared when the Roman guard was overcome.

Some may inquire, 'Why did not our Lord appear to the women and the apostles in the same glorious manner, with shining features?' We answer that to have done so would have been to hinder the very object he had in view. How could his followers, who were not then begotten of the holy Spirit and who consequently were unable to understand spiritual things (1 Corinthians 2:14), have understood that a being shining like an angel was the Master whom three days before they had seen crucified? Even if they could have associated the two in some manner, what evidence would there have been for others who have lived since then?

The removal of our Lord's remains from the tomb was an essential to the faith of the disciples of that day and of all who would believe on him since that time through their word. Manifestations of his being alive from the dead were also necessary to all these. The instructions which our Lord gave, his expositions of the prophecies and his application of these to himself, given at that particular time, were necessary as a firm foundation for faith. None of these objects could have been so well served in any other way than that which was adopted.

THE VARIOUS ACCOUNTS HARMONIZED

To harmonize the various accounts of the resurrection we must suppose that the women charged with the work of embalming our Lord's body lived in different parts of Jerusalem, and did not all arrive at the same hour. Mary Magdalene arrived first, and finding the tomb empty hastened to tell some of the disciples. First she found Peter and afterward John, both of whom at once ran to the sepulcher, while Mary probably returned more slowly, arriving there after the two disciples and the other women had gone. It was at this second visit that our Lord revealed himself to her. She had been weeping, and had stooped down to look through the low doorway of the tomb, as if to reassure herself that it was empty. Then she saw for the first time two angels in white, who inquired respecting her sorrow. Doubtless the angels had been there when she was there before, but had not chosen to manifest themselves.

Doubtless holy angels had in charge not only our Lord's body, but also the interests of his bereaved followers; and now and then some of these appeared as young men, though they were not flesh, but spirit beings, assuming fleshly bodies for a time, that they might render the service necessary. They are said to appear, because they could not be seen except as they manifested themselves. In Luke 24:4 these same angels appearing as men are said to have been clothed in shining garments, so that they might not be understood to be men, but might at once be recognized as heavenly messengers. On the contrary, when our risen Lord as "a quickening spirit" similarly appeared in flesh in order to come closer to his followers, he did not appear in shining garments, but in ordinary apparel, assumed for the purpose, in order that he might have the better opportunity for giving the instructions which his followers needed.

IMPORTANCE OF OUR LORD'S RESURRECTION

That our risen Lord is no longer flesh, but a spirit being with celestial glory, is clearly established by Paul's narrative

of his own experiences. He explains that it was necessary that the twelve apostles should be able to bear witness to the fact that Jesus had risen from the dead. There could have been no Gospel message of hope of divine favor through a dead Savior. If Christ had not risen from the dead, who would there have been who could establish the Messianic kingdom? Who would there have been who could have given the church a share in the first resurrection and in the heavenly glory? Who would there be who could call forth from the tomb the sleeping thousands of millions of Adam's race, awakening them to the opportunities of life everlasting through obedience to the laws of the kingdom?

All this the Apostle calls forcibly to our minds, saying, "If Christ be not risen from the dead, your faith is vain; and all who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished." (1 Corinthians 15:16-18) From this we see that St. Paul in no way shared the views of those who unscripturally claim that Jesus, while dead, was really alive, and that the resurrection of the dead is a mere formality, quite unnecessary to the carrying out of God's plan of salvation. On the contrary the divine teaching is that the dead know not anything, and that the resurrection of the dead is an absolute necessity to future life or blessing.

The fact that Christ has risen from the dead is a guarantee of God's power to raise the dead. Additionally, it is a guarantee that Jesus accomplished the work which he came into the world to do. It proves to us that he must have kept the divine law perfectly; else he would not have been worthy of a resurrection from the dead. It also proves the value of his death, its efficacy as the offset of Adam's sin, and thus as the ransom-price for the sin of the world.

POST-RESURRECTION MANIFESTATIONS

Our Lord's manifestations in the flesh during the forty days subsequent to his resurrection correspond exactly to those manifestations which he had made long before, one of which was to Abraham. The Logos ate and talked with Abraham, but the Hebrew thought of him only as a man, because the heavenly guest appeared in human form and ordinary clothing. He vanished from Abraham's sight just as he did from the apostles' sight and from the sight of Saul of Tarsus. When he appeared to Abraham, he was a spirit being, and he was a spirit being again after his resurrection, when he appeared to his apostles. But in the meantime, he had been made flesh for the very purpose of suffering for the unjust.

Having accomplished the suffering, there was no further reason why our Lord should remain flesh. The heavenly Lord of Glory is not flesh, not a man. If he were, he would still be "a little lower than the angels." But the Scriptures assure us that in his resurrection he ascended "far above angels."—Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:3, 4.

It was just as easy for Jesus to appear in one form as in another, in one kind of clothing as in another. He appeared in various forms to impress the double lesson that he was not dead and that he was no longer a man. His second appearance, with the wounds with which to convince St. Thomas, is especially noteworthy. Our Lord was ready to give any demonstration that was necessary to convince his disciples that he had actually risen from the dead; for unless they were so convinced, they could neither do the work before them nor receive the holy Spirit at Pentecost. The holy Spirit was given only to those who believed in Jesus, those who accepted the fact of his death as the sacrifice for sin and who trusted in him as the Savior through whom would come the divine blessing. This impartation of the holy Spirit had the effect of getting them to a new nature, and restoring them to fellowship with God as his children and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord.

NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL

JUNE 30.—QUARTERLY REVIEW.

THE REASONABLENESS OF ST. PAUL'S TEACHINGS—THE FALSE GOSPEL OF THE DARK AGES A TRAVESTY ON JUSTICE AND LOVE—THE TRUE GOSPEL, OF WHICH THE GREAT APOSTLE WAS NOT ASHAMED—CROSS AND CROWN—SHAME AND GLORY—SPIRITUAL SEED OF ABRAHAM TO BLESS ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH—THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM.

"I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."—Romans 1:16

Whoever has studied the masterly writings of the Apostle Paul, constituting so large a portion of the New Testament, must surely have been impressed with the reasonableness and logic of his mental positions as therein stated. While it is true that not many really understand the Bible, yet even those who do not grasp the full import of the Apostle's teachings can see enough therein to convince them of the soundness of his logic; and the comparatively few, begotten of the holy Spirit, who really understand the depth of his writings

unanimously give his epistles the first place among the books of the Bible as well as in general literature.

Now we ask all who recognize St. Paul's ability and sterling honesty of expression: Is it possible to suppose that when the Apostle wrote the words which constitute our Golden Text he had in mind anything akin to the gross travesty on justice and love which during the dark ages was branded the Gospel of Christ, and which has been handed down to us under that caption? Could we suppose that the great Apostle had

in mind a race not only born in sin and shapen in iniquity, but condemned by its Creator to an eternity of torture since the time of Adam's disobedience? Could we suppose that St. Paul had in mind for such a race a message that Christ had died and that the net result of the Savior's sacrifice for sin would affect only about one in ten thousand of earth's thousands of millions, to open the eyes of their understanding and to lead them from sin to righteousness, to obedience as saints with a reward of heavenly glory?

Even in the Apostle's day he had noted the tendency of the adversary to bring false doctrines and to put "another gospel" instead of the true one. (Galatians 1:6-9) The faithful Paul was not only ashamed of this false gospel, but denounced it and forewarned the church to be on guard against the wiles of the devil, who would attempt to present himself as an angel of light in order to deceive the followers of Christ. (2 Corinthians 11:13-15) To what extent Satan has been successful as a theologian and teacher in the church let all the creeds of the dark ages bear witness!

MANY ASHAMED OF THE PERVERTED GOSPEL

For many years past, and especially since the beginning of the harvest of the Gospel age, thinking people have been perplexed and fretted in respect to the creeds of Christendom. Both heart and head told them that these creeds are wrong, that such a plan as therein outlined, so far from being a heavenly one, is earthly, sensual, devilish, far beneath the standard of moral honesty and decency among men—not to speak of love for our neighbor as for ourselves, which would do for others as we would that they should do for us. This false gospel contradicts entirely the Lord's statement that as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than man's ways.—Isaiah 55:8-11.

Many of our fallen race, alas! are very mean, and are impelled by very wicked, malicious influences at times. But we have yet to find a man or a woman so wretchedly degraded, so unjust, so unsympathetic, so unloving, so fierce, so venomous, so deficient, that he or she would purposely, knowingly, intentionally, bring into being a creature, human or brute, and then take continual pleasure, year after year, in torturing that creature, in witnessing its sufferings, its groans and its agonizing cries. Yet by following Satan's delusion foisted upon humanity during the dark ages, many Christian people have unwittingly ascribed to the God of wisdom, justice, love and power a plan which would make him more detestable than any other being in the universe.

Alas, for such a slander of our heavenly Father, for such blasphemy of his holy name, we might well mourn in sackcloth and ashes for the remainder of our earthly life. But he is gracious to us, and does not impute our transgressions to us. He remembers that we are fallen dust, and that as a race we have come largely under the deceptive influence of our adversary, who has blinded mankind with ignorance and superstition. It is high time that all mankind awake, that they learn to use our God-given reasoning faculties upon religious matters, as well as upon the affairs of daily life.

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

How different from the false gospel of the dark ages is the Gospel of Christ! The Bible teaches that man was created in God's image and likeness, but that he fell into sin through disobedience of his Creator's commands, and so incurred the penalty of death, extinction. The Gospel of which the Apostle Paul was not ashamed declares that God in mercy provided Jesus as our Redeemer. It shows that no member of the fallen race could redeem it because each child of Adam was himself under the divine sentence of death. It explains that Christ's death was the offset to Adam's sentence, and that as the whole race suffered through Adam's disobedience and sentence so likewise God could with equal justice permit the redemptive work of Jesus to apply not only to Adam but to all of his posterity.

This Gospel of which St. Paul was not ashamed is clearly set forth in Romans 5:12-19. The Apostle does not say that the penalty upon Adam was eternal torment, but that it was death; nor does he say that the penalty upon mankind is eternal torture. He does not say that Christ went to eternal torment to pay the penalty upon man, but that "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." (1 Corinthians 15:3) He does not say that mankind is to be recovered from eternal torment, but rather brought back from the dead, that "there is to be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust."—Acts 24:15.

Delineating still further the Gospel of which he was not ashamed, the Apostle explains that during this Gospel age God is gathering out of the world a special elect class to be the bride, the Lamb's wife, to suffer with him that they may

be also glorified with him, to die with him that they may also live with him. (Romans 8:17) He declares that there has been a mystery connected with this subject which is designed of God to be understood only by the spirit-begotten ones, the faithful. He tells us that this mystery consists in the fact that the heavenly Father foreknew and predestinated that the great Messiah, the Seed of Abraham through whom all the families of the earth are to be blessed, would be composed not only of our Lord Jesus, but also of the elect church, which symbolically is the body of Christ.—Galatians 3:8, 16, 29.

The false doctrines of the dark ages, of which we are greatly ashamed, declare that after the elect church shall have been gathered, all the families of the earth shall forever be condemned and eternally tortured. But the Gospel of which the Apostle Paul was not ashamed declares to the contrary, teaching that after the elect church shall have been completed, its mission as the Seed of Abraham, as the glorified kingdom of Christ, the Millennial kingdom under the whole heavens, shall be to bless all the families of the earth, to convert them, to lift them up out of sin and death conditions, to give all the willing and obedient a full opportunity to return to divine favor as Adam at first enjoyed it and to an earthly Paradise restored.

WHAT KINGDOM HONORS WILL COST THE ELECT

The Gospel of which the Apostle was not ashamed, and which he preached faithfully, invited those having hearing ears to consecrate their lives to God in order that they might be of the elect church. It gave assurance that the cross of the present time would, if faithfully carried to the end of the way, bring glory, honor and immortality, a share with our Lord Jesus in his Millennial kingdom and its glorious work of blessing all mankind. In view of this sure reward-believers were urged to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God through Christ, and then to suffer with him now, to be sharers in his ignominy, shame and death in order that in due time they might be sharers with him in his kingdom and its blessed work.

In all of his teachings our Lord kept before the minds of the church the fact that the cross and the crown are inseparably united in the divine program. "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him." At the second advent of Christ his faithful followers were to receive a crown of glory which fadeth not away. (1 Peter 5:4) In their glorified condition they are to be the exalted Seed of Abraham with the glorious mission of blessing Israel after the flesh and all the other families of the earth. (Romans 11:25-32) Even the casting away of the Jews from divine favor upon their rejection of Messiah, the Apostle assures us, will eventually be overruled, so that Natural Israel will receive mercy at the hands of Spiritual Israel.

In his letter to the Ephesians the Apostle indicates that the glories of the church are not to be expected in the present time, which is a period of sacrifice and of suffering with Christ. The glory is to follow, and is to last not only during the thousand years set apart for the world's blessing, but during the ages to come, throughout eternity. The elect church, proved and tested by present disciplines, will be forever blest with her Lord, and joint-heir with him in the riches of the grace of God. (Ephesians 2:7) Therefore the Apostle urges us not to cast away our confidence, our trust in the promises of God; for in due season we shall receive them if we faint not.

In Hebrews 6:17-20 attention is called to the fact that during this trial time of suffering with Christ the oathbound promise made to Abraham is to be, to us who believe God's word and oath, an anchor to our souls sure and steadfast and entering into that which is beyond the veil. There our forerunner is entered for us, even Jesus, who has already been glorified as the great antitypical High Priest, who during the Millennial age shall exercise his priestly office for the blessing of the world.

In line with this thought is the assurance that all of the faithful of the church of Christ, the "little flock," shall in due time be members of the Royal Priesthood, who as enthroned priests associated with their royal High Priest, Jesus, shall share with him the blessed privilege of ruling, instructing and assisting the world of mankind. Who, we ask, needs to be ashamed of such a Gospel? This is not the Gospel of the dark ages, not bad tidings of great misery for nearly all people, but the Gospel of the Apostles, of our Lord Jesus, the Gospel which the angel announced to the awe-stricken shepherds when he said: "Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy which shall be to all people," not merely to the Jews, not merely to the "little flock," but eventually to all the families of the earth.—Luke 2:10, 11; 12:32; Genesis 22:16-18.

SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS

CHRIST MY LIFE; DEATH MY GAIN

Question.—In the comment on Philippians 1:23, pages 670-673 of "The New Creation," the statement is made that the Greek word *analūsai* is used in only one other place in the New Testament—in Luke 12:36—whereas I find the same word used in Paul's second letter to Timothy, 4:6, "the time of my departure is at hand." Here the thought seems to be exactly opposite to that in Volume Six. Kindly explain.

Answer.—It was Brother Russell's intention to alter the comment referred to, that it might conform more clearly to all the facts, but evidently failing strength and press of other matters interfered. We submit the following, first quoting a free translation of the passage involved:

"For as to life, life to me is Christ. As to death, it is gain. Now if to continue to live means fruitful labor I have nothing to say as to my preference. I am strongly appealed to from both sides. But if I should consult my own real desire, it is for the final release and for the being with Christ, for that is by far the best thing. But, on the other hand, I am assured that, for your sake, it is more necessary that I should continue to live; and therefore I know that I shall remain with you, that I may promote your advancement and your joy in your faith; so that, in Christ Jesus, your joy in me may abound through my being present with you again."

TWO THINGS AND A THIRD

Only two things of importance are mentioned by the Apostle up to this point, which might call for an expression of preference on his part. The one is a continuance of his life as a messenger of Christ, which, as he says, involves considerable labor. The other is the rest from his irksome surroundings which the sleep of death would afford. He tells the brethren that he is really unable to determine which of these two is preferable; the former would have advantages for the believers and the latter would have an advantage to himself, for aside from his privileges of service he felt that there was small incentive to continue to live. But there was yet a third thing which he did desire, about which there was no uncertainty and which he expressed as a thing much better than the undecided subject which he had just mentioned.

Those who translated our King James version, and many others of equal ability, have felt justified in making the Apostle say that he had a desire "to depart and to be with Christ." There has seemed to them defense for such action in the fact that the Greek word rendered "depart" is the same as that employed by the same Apostle in 2 Timothy 4:6, where he says: "The time of my departure is at hand." As a matter of fact, neither of these passages is translated as accurately as could be desired.

Literally, the Apostle says in Philippians 1:23: "Having a desire for the releasing." The Greek word here employed is *analūsai*. *Ana* as a prefix is exactly correspondent to our English prefix *re*, and *lūsai* is readily recognizable, even without the Greek lexicon, as related to our English words loose and lease. Analyze is the English cognate form of the Greek word *analūsai*. If a thing is analyzed it means that it is broken up into its constituent parts; the component particles or elements are released from one another, either in one's mind or in fact. But in the literary or general sense, the exact English equivalent is release. It will be noted that in this word there is no indication whatever as to what course, if any, the released person or object would take after the release. The word in itself means neither depart nor return, though either of these thoughts might attach to the word if the circumstances surrounding the release were well enough known.

This word occurs only two other times in the New Testament, namely, Luke 12:36 and 2 Timothy 4:6. In the Luke passage the Master says: "And ye yourselves [be] like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he lets loose [*analūsee*] from the nuptial feast." In other words, "when he disconnects or disengages himself from the social obligations which he took upon him when he went to the celebration." Since he was not at home and the circumstance describes the Lord's servants as watching for him, it becomes a fair translation to use the word return, but it is confusing when compared with other usages of that word in the sacred writings. Our modern expressions, "when he breaks away," or "when the party breaks up" have a similar thought at the bottom of them.

The other instance in which the Apostle Paul uses this word manifestly refers to the time of his death. Here he says: "The time of my release [*tees analūseos*, release or dissolution] is at hand." It would be merely captious defense to say that this word is a noun and the other two words are verbs, and that thus the significance might be altered, be-

cause the words are identical in root and meaning. No amount of argument could prove to anyone who understands the Lord's plan that the Apostle meant return in this instance, for he had never been dead before. He evidently had reference to the time when he would be released from the labors and burdens which were his in the flesh and concerning which he wrote in another letter: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death? (Romans 7:24) Again, it carries with it the thought of his dissolution, both socially and physically: the body would return to dust and the spirit of life into the care and keeping which God had provided, awaiting the day of "His appearing," when the faithful Paul should be raised incorruptible and glorious in the first resurrection.

Coming back to the expression of the 23rd verse of the first chapter of Philippians, the Apostle must have had reference neither to departing nor to returning directly, but simply to "the releasing;" that is, either to his own final release from death at the time of the first resurrection, or to Christ's return, when loosed from the heavens, which were to retain him until that time (Acts 3:21), and probably ambiguously uttered as meaning both things, for the two are inseparably linked together. Of one thing we are certain: he did not in this instance have reference to his own demise, because that item is one of the two things concerning which he said he had no preference. Had the inspired Apostle desired to convey the idea of 'going away or departing elsewhere' he would have continued to use the word *porevoma*, as he does one hundred and fifty times in the New Testament.

But the question might properly arise: 'Why did the Lord allow the Apostle to use the same word in 2 Timothy 4:6 as he does in Philippians 1:23, in the former case referring to his death, and in the latter case having evident reference to his release from death at Christ's second presence?' In response to this we cite the words of our Lord Jesus when he quoted from the prophet of old: "By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see and shall not perceive." It will be readily discernible that no one not possessing a general knowledge of God's plans and purposes would be able to understand and fit into their proper places these apparently inconsistent expressions. Plenty of opportunity is left for the wise ones of the earth to stumble, plenty of margin left for those who prefer to doubt.

"FOR YOUR INIQUITIES"

Question.—"Thus saith the Lord, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? Or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away!" (Isaiah 50:1) What does this passage mean?

Answer.—It was a custom among the Jews that if a wife proved to be undesirable to her husband, she might be given a bill of divorcement and put away. (Deuteronomy 24:1; Matthew 19:6-8) Another part of their law provided that if any one got into debt he and his family might be sold for the debt, sold into a measure of service; that is, they could be compelled to give a certain amount of their time to the creditor to make good the obligation, or debt.

Now, the Lord is saying to these Jews, 'You are sold, but I have not sold you; it was not that I was in need. A debtor could not claim you for debt, as my household. It is not that I became involved and therefore must turn you over, lose control over you. I have no creditors, nobody could come upon me and take you away. I have not put away your mother, the Law Covenant: I still recognize the contract. I still agree to all that I engaged to do under that Law Covenant. Therefore, you are not put away illegally.'

"Then what is the trouble? I wish you to think about this, Why is it that you are cast off into a foreign land, into Babylon? What is the reason I am not showing you favor? It is not because I have violated my obligations. The Law Covenant has not been put away by me. It is still in force. I still recognize it. It is not that you have been sold into slavery because I had a debt. Look to the reason. The reason, I tell you plainly is this: You are the violators of the Covenant, you have gone off into sin. I am merely chastening you that you may recover yourselves and return to me. The sooner you get this proper idea, and chasten yourselves and renew your covenant of faithfulness, the better it will be for you, and I will be ready to receive you."

THE THIEF IN PARADISE

Question.—Does the Greek text of our Lord's words to the thief on the cross, "Verily I say unto thee this day, 'thou shalt be with me in paradise,'" warrant the change of the comma from before "this day" to after it, as suggested in Volume Six of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES.

Answer.—Yes. Grammatically, whenever *secmeron*, “to-day,” comes after a verb it belongs to that verb, unless it is separated from it and thrown into the next clause by the presence of the particle *hoti*, “that.” See e. g. Mark 14:30; Luke 4:21; 19:9; Matthew 26:34. In the first and last texts *hoti* is translated, but in the Luke passages it is not, though in the Greek text. A Greek concordance will show how continually *hoti* is used to divide the clauses. The Hebrew idiom of “today” attached to the preceding verb is very common to Moses. See Deuteronomy 4:26, 40; 6:6; 8:19; 9:3; 11:26, 28; 30:15, 18, 19, and many others. A translation and an interpretation that makes our Lord himself contradict the Scriptures, cannot be correct; must of necessity be false. See further explanation in Volume Six, pages 667-670.

THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB

Question.—When will the marriage of the Lamb take place? Who will perform the ceremony?

Answer.—The marriage of the Lamb will come when “his wife hath made herself ready,” in the end, the harvest, of this Gospel age. The bride is a multitudinous number and since this marriage began in 1878, its consummation will, we think, take place probably in 1918—forty years from the time it began. We are not sure that we have the matter of the marriage fully correct. What we say about it is merely our opinion. If the Lord shall see fit to take us home this year we shall of course rejoice. When the last member of the body shall have gone beyond the veil, the door will then be shut. After that time none will be recognized as of the bride class.

Then another work will be under way, pertaining to those who are called “the virgins, her companions, that follow her.” After having passed through great tribulations, these also will be received on the other side of the veil, but not with the same degree of honor as the bride class. It will be to great honor, though they are not worthy of the highest place. But they will be worthy of the place which they will receive.

When thinking of the marriage ceremony, we are very apt to think of the marriage ceremonies of today, and to draw our conclusions from them. But this is a mistake. The marriage service among the Jews was very different from such as we have now. With the Jews, the father or the brother of the bride would make the arrangements. The bride had nothing whatever to do with it. There was a covenant entered into by which she was engaged to the prospective bridegroom, and certain papers were drawn up, stating what dowry she should have and what provision her husband should make for her in life. Then these papers were sealed.

That agreement constituted the engagement, the betrothal. Nothing more was to be done except that the would-be bridegroom must wait for a number of months, and then at the appropriate time, within a year, he would come to receive his bride to himself. During the interval he would be preparing the home for her. Should she in the meantime prove unfaithful, it would work a cancellation of the contract; for this covenant arrangement was official. When the time came for the bridegroom to receive the bride, he came to the home of the bride, who was immediately received by him and taken to her new home. There was nothing in the way of a ceremony. The friends would then be ushered into that home for a feast, which would last for a week or so. The taking away of the bride was often in the evening, but not always so; it was sometimes in the morning.

THE TIME OF BETROTHAL

All this is the picture, we believe, that the Lord would give us respecting the church and her relationship with Christ. The members of the church do not come into relationship with Christ until the Father first draws them. The Lord said: “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.” (John 6:44) After the Father has drawn us, the contract is entered into—that we make our consecration. Having done this we receive some token of the Father's favor—we receive the earnest, the holy Spirit. We become espoused to Christ. Then after we have proved faithful to him through the remainder of this life, the great One who is to be the Bridegroom comes to receive us to himself. Jesus, having gone to prepare a place for us, will come again that we may be with him in the heavenly condition.—John 14:2, 3.

As for the marriage feast, it will delay awhile after the bride has entered in, waiting for the bridesmaids; for the Scriptures promise that they shall be present at the festival—the opportunity for expressing good wishes.—Psa. 45:14.

The antitypical betrothal began in the Pentecostal outpouring. There the church was betrothed to her Lord; and the betrothal will not be ended until the Lord has taken to himself the last member of the bride class. We do not regard the Jewish marriage as a type, but as a symbol, a figure of the marriage of the Lamb.

The church class is not at first ready for the high position to which she is called. Indeed, the Scriptures represent that the Lord Jesus was made ready for his high position. (Heb. 2:10) But he was, to begin with, “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.” We, on the contrary, are imperfect. We need a good deal of preparation in order to make us ready for the glorious position to which we have been called. Among other things, we are to do a certain embroidery work, the pattern for which was given in our Lord's own character.

THE WEDDING PREPARATION

This embroidery represents the fruits of the Spirit; and we are to copy our Lord's meekness, his gentleness, his brotherly kindness, his love. We are to copy his full consecration—to do the Father's will, in every sense of the word. We are to delight in him, we are to do his will, to regard him as our Head, and to order all the affairs of life with that thought in mind.

The bride class must have not only a wedding garment, but an embroidered wedding garment. It must be also without spot or wrinkle. The bride class is a very special order; hence the particularity represented in this robe. Its members are to assist each other in the matter of preparing the wedding robe, and the class will have made itself fully ready for entering into the marriage when the last member shall have passed under the veil.

In the 45th Psalm the picture is given of the Bridegroom bringing his bride into the presence of the great King; Jehovah. Later, the bridesmaids, the companions of the bride, follow her. It will be after the bride class is glorified that she will be presented to the Father—apparently very shortly after her glorious change. The great company, we think, will be presented very soon after; for the Scriptures tell us that they will be present, by invitation, at the marriage supper of the Lamb. This seems to indicate that the principal part of the joys and festivities attending this will be deferred until the great company will be there to participate in them.—Revelation 19:9.

INTERESTING LETTERS

THINKS THE LORD HIMSELF IS SPEAKING TO US!

BELOVED BROTHER RUTHERFORD:—

You will be no doubt surprised to hear that the Seventh Volumes are still missing from South Africa. Our dear Brother Johnston received two copies, and Sister Reeson of Durban, brought one over from England recently. These three are the sum total of Volume Seven in this country.

In the Lord's providence I was the first in the country to read Volume Seven. As you are aware, Brother Johnston was on a pilgrim tour. On her way to Durban Sister Reeson came to the WATCH TOWER office here; and to my unbounded astonishment and pleasure she produced the volume. I could scarcely restrain my tears of joy on handling the precious “wages of the Lord.” The dear sister had only a few hours to spare; but I got through 175 pages as quickly as I could. I cannot describe my feelings to you as I read. I was not large enough to contain all the joy that the Lord was literally pouring into me. Who of the Lord's little ones can doubt for a moment the authenticity of this volume? It is the Lord

himself speaking to us. Praise be to Jehovah's holy name and to his dear Son!

When Sister Reeson left, I was wondering what would happen next. The following day Brother Johnston's copy turned up. When I went to the office, the volume was lying on the table out of its cover. As Brother Johnston was expected back in a day or two, I made the most of my opportunity, and read until about four o'clock in the morning. The next day I had the volume finished.

I have also read “Light after Darkness” and “Harvest Siftings No. 2.” My thought is that the great adversary is attempting to sidetrack you from smiting his evil forces, and he is failing miserably. Not one of the Lord's true sheep will doubt for a moment regarding the channel through which the “meat in due season” is coming. Each WATCH TOWER is a remarkable testimony to the fact.

My heart burns with love to you and to all of “like precious faith.” The goal is in sight. The veil is thin; and soon we shall see him who died for us, and shall be presented to Je-

hovah himself, the very essence of love. The Lord bless you and keep you is my earnest prayer.

In Christian love and service,
Your brother in Christ. H. P. WILLIAMS.—S. Africa.

REPORTS DISAFFECTION SLIGHT

DEAR BRETHREN:—

Instances are brought to my attention where members of the opposing faction are endeavoring to confuse and mislead the Lord's saints into believing that there is a split in many of the classes, and that a considerable proportion of the class numbers are taking side with the opposers of the SOCIETY. As for instance, it is reported that at Pittsburgh 180 have defected from the ecclesia and are now meeting with the opposition class; whereas in my recent visit to Pittsburgh I learned there is no split, and that the dozen or so sympathizers with the opposers of the SOCIETY are still meeting regularly with the 450 or more members of the Pittsburgh congregation.

As you know I have been regularly in the pilgrim service since the first of last November, and in all that time I have found only about four classes in which there are opponents of the SOCIETY or any antagonistic to the "Finished Mystery"—in fact very few who have any sympathy with the opposition movement; and yet as I move along from class to class, I am told that this or that class ahead of me is reported to be in trouble along this line. When I reach there I find nothing of the kind, and the class members manifest much surprise at having been so wrongly reported. In the few instances where I have found wavering ones I have experienced but little difficulty in setting them straight. By the Lord's grace, and by my knowledge of the facts, I have been enabled to show clearly why the Seventh Volume is really the posthumous work of Pastor Russell, and when the facts are set forth the hesitating ones usually grasp the situation and thank me for having made the matter plain.

I notice, however, that the brethren who are decidedly in support of the opposers are amongst those who are absent from the meeting where I bring the Seventh Volume into my talk. It seems to be the pleasure of the Lord to favor and encourage only those whose hearts are right. I would not presume to judge anyone, but experience teaches me that divine favor rests with the dear ones who are not grounded in the teachings of error and misrepresentation, but who adhere to the policy of the SOCIETY which all along has been the divine instrument for comfort and blessing to the Lord's dear saints. I am heartily glad to find so vast a majority in full harmony, and to note the sweet spirit of Christ manifested by the ecclesias in general.

Your brother in Christ, J. A. BARNET.—Pilgrim.

REJOICING IN THE TRUTH AT 68

DEAR BRETHREN:—

I desire to express my joy and feeling to you for the unspeakable grace our heavenly Father has been pleased to bestow upon me. He pulled me out of that state of ignorance, darkness and superstition, in which I had been unfortunately plunged, first by having spent the first twenty years of my life as a Roman Catholic, afterward as a member of the Presbyterian Church for some time, and finally as an unbeliever for a number of years.

The blessedness I have experienced since I came to the knowledge of God's wonderful Present Truth is due absolutely to the efforts of that "faithful servant" of our Lord, the late Pastor Russell. Blessed be his memory; for the "Crown of Life" promised to every overcomer on this side the veil must have been his reward.

By the grace of God, I have had the privilege and opportunity to read and study the first six volumes of STUDIES from his pen, and also THE WATCH TOWER you have been kind enough to send me since November, 1916. Being willing to learn, I prayed the Almighty Father to help me, and, blessed be the Lord, the result was that I was brought down to the feet of our Master and Savior Jesus Christ. Brother Nettleton, the elder of our Union Avenue Ecclesia, always stood by me, assisting me in all my wants most generously.

I am an old man, 68 years of age, a widower without children. I am poor and afflicted with bodily pains and infirmities to such extent that, being unable to earn my living by ordinary work, I have been compelled, since a few years, to become an inmate of a benevolent institution. But although poor and afflicted in the flesh, I feel like singing God's praises constantly. Being a French-Canadian, I am thoroughly well educated in the French language, besides being familiar with the English and Italian languages.

Dear Brethren of the Editorial Committee, my prayers go up to the throne of grace for you, and may our heavenly Father help us all to carry on to the end the good work of

spreading the glorious Gospel truth, "while it is yet day light for the night will soon come when no one shall be able to work."

Your brother in Christ, JOSEPH DAoust.—Can.

"CONVICTION TO THE CONSECRATED"

DEAR BRETHREN:—

Please accept my very best thanks for Volume Seven, STUDIES. I am enjoying my study of this work greatly, and think, the more I peruse it, that it is compiled in a masterly way. The interpretations carry conviction to the consecrated mind as to their truth, all being in perfect harmony with the teachings we have received in the preceding six volumes. I have no doubt that we are now receiving the meat in due season through this Seventh Volume for which I desire to thank our loving heavenly Father as the great Author of all the glorious plan. With much love in the Lord.

Your loving brother, MORTON EDGAR.—Scotland.

"TONGUE FILLED WITH SINGING"

DEAR BRETHREN:—

I have hesitated some time about writing you, realizing what an enormous daily mail you must receive. But I can remain silent no longer; I so much desire to be identified with you.

I came out of the Baptist denomination in October last, took the Vow, made my consecration, symbolizing it at the Cleveland Convention, November 18.

What a wonderful experience the coming out of Babylon was! I thought I was making an enormous sacrifice to leave the denomination and associations of a lifetime. And now, brethren, after being out of it for only six months and looking back at it with the searchlight of God's truth, I can see what I really did leave—"a great pile of husks and junk." When I remember how I believed it, taught it, and enjoyed it, I stand amazed. What am I that he was mindful of me? It is wonderful to be brought out of darkness into his marvelous light.

While I feel like the eleventh hour laborer, I am rejoicing in the hope of my calling, and striving daily to be worthy to see my dear Redeemer face to face.

Like all of the friends, words cannot express my feelings of gratitude for our dear Brother Russell; so I will only say, Praise God for the Seventh Messenger.

Yours in the service of our Lord and King.

G. L. B.—Ohio.

EXPRESSES LOVE AND CONFIDENCE

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE ANOINTED:—

Grace, mercy and peace be multiplied to you with our love. It is our privilege at this time to express to you our love.

We desire also to inform you of our confidence in you as the Lord's channel of blessing and to tell you of our sympathy with you in this your hour of trial.

THE WATCH TOWER is still full of sweet encouragement and refreshment and our hope is being strengthened by the prospect of early participation, while we are bestirring ourselves the more in order to the securing of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; laboring the more diligently "if by any means we might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."

Be assured, in conclusion, of our constant prayers on your behalf.

Your brother in the Lord,

THE BRIGHTON ECCLESIA.—England.

SATISFIED WITH THE FOOD

DEAR BRETHREN:—

I am attaching my check for \$—— for Good Hopes fund. I assure you that it is a genuine pleasure for me to forward this and sincerely regret that circumstances will not permit my sending a great deal more.

It seems to me the March 15th issue of THE WATCH TOWER was about the most inspiring we have had for a long time, particularly the first article; and as a brother expressed it last evening, I am thoroughly satisfied with the food the Lord is still dispensing through THE TOWER. Undoubtedly it continues to be the greatest journal published on earth, and I hope it is the Lord's will to permit us to continue to receive it unto the end.

Earnestly praying our heavenly Father's richest blessings on the work of the Society, and all engaged in it, particularly those in places of responsibility, I am,

Your brother by his grace,

P. H. G.—Tenn.

TAKE FRESH COURAGE

DEAR BRETHREN:—

Greetings in the Lord. Have just received our WATCH TOWER of March 1st. After reading it very carefully, noting its contents, its ring and tone, we take fresh courage.