

BROTHER RUSSELL'S FOREIGN TOUR

[LETTER DELAYED EN ROUTE]

TO THE FAMILY OF GOD AT BROOKLYN BETHEL AND SCATTERED ABROAD EVERYWHERE:—

When the announcement of our proposed tour of Great Britain, and, incidentally, to Palestine, was published, some of the friends inferred that it signified that there was something further to be brought out respecting the Great Pyramid and its teachings. Others thought that our purpose was some special effort to reach the Jews in connection with the return of divine favor to them and their land. However, we set these speculations at rest at once by stating that we went in the interest of the newspapers which are publishing our sermons—that the interest in the sermons might thereby be increased and the interest in the good tidings deepened. But our special object, as stated, was to visit and encourage and strengthen the Bible Students, especially of Great Britain. Our hope is that all of these objects will be accomplished—that the Lord will so supervise and direct and order our goings that his name may have praise and that his people may have refreshment and blessing.

Upon seeing the announcement a number of friends in different parts of the country advised us of their desire to make the journey at the same time, if we were willing. We assured them that all had the same opportunity, and that we would be glad of their company, if the Lord's providences seemed to open the way for them. Thus it happened that our company leaving New York numbered twenty-one, seventeen in addition to our own party, which consisted of Brother Driscoll, representative of the Press Association; Brother L. W. Jones, who served us as stenographer on the Atlantic, and Brother Rutherford, who served as stenographer on the Mediterranean, and who will visit the friends in Denmark, Sweden and Norway while we are in Great Britain and who will follow us in Great Britain, reaching home about a month or so later than we.

The friends who accompanied us were Brother and Sister Davault, of Illinois; Brother and Sister Ward and son, of Maryland; Brother and Sister Owens, and Sisters Cobb and Noble, of New York; Sisters Frost, Paschal and Houston, of Texas; Brother Pierson, of Connecticut; Brothers Wilson and Young, of Oklahoma; Sister Jackson, of Canada; Brother Koetitz, of Germany, the latter joining our party in Switzerland, where, and subsequently, he served as our interpreter. We had the pleasure also of Sister Rutherford's company as far as Paris.

As our vessel left her dock at New York upwards of one hundred and fifty of the New York church waved us good-bye and sang for us several of the precious Hymns of Dawn. The incident was very impressive for us, as well as for others, and surely served to tighten the bonds of Christian love which unite all of our hearts. The upturned faces of the friends evidenced their love and zeal, their fellowship with the Master and with us. Our hearts were made glad by this manifestation of Christian fellowship, and we assure them all that not only they who were at the shore were remembered in our prayers, but all of the dear ones everywhere, for we well knew that our itinerary having been published in *THE WATCH TOWER*, prayers would be ascending for us and for God's blessing upon our journey—from many hearts, from many lands.

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds,
Is like to that above."

Our journey was uneventful to Cherbourg, except that we had a little fog part of the way and a little rough weather. However, God graciously preserved us from any serious illness and we landed happy and well, a day later than anticipated, spending the night on the boat instead of in Paris. However, Paris had few attractions for us. Here, and to the end of our journey, we were rendered valuable assistance by the Tourist Agency of T. Cook & Son, through whom our tickets were purchased.

At Berne we met some of the French and German friends, to whom we spoke of the gracious things of the divine plan. We noted the Covenant of Grace, under which the church is being developed as the body of Christ, the spiritual seed of Abraham, and Israel's Law Covenant, and also the New Covenant which will succeed it in due time for the blessing of Israel and through Israel all the families of the earth. After speaking to the friends for nearly four hours, and we trust proving of some assistance to them and comfort and joy in the Lord, we departed for Zurich, where we had a very pleas-

ant season of fellowship with about sixty or more of German-Swiss friends, to whom we spoke for about two hours. We departed from them with many remembrances of their loving attention and kind words, which we understood through the interpreter, but read still more particularly in their eyes and general deportment.

OUR VISIT TO THE PYRAMID

On Wednesday we hastened through beautiful Italy to Naples and on board our ship. We had a delightful season of rest and refreshment on the sea before reaching Alexandria and then Cairo. The chief interest of the latter place centered in the Pyramid. Since we visited it eighteen years ago several of the casing stones have been found at the base of the Pyramid by the removal of the rubbish which had covered them for centuries. Inside the Pyramid there was also a change. The Brothers Edgar, of Scotland, visited the Pyramid last year to go over the measurements of its passageways, and incidentally they had the downward passage cleared of the rubbish which had accumulated in its mouth, entirely hiding it. The downward passage from its juncture with the ascending passage is now closed with an iron gate for the safety of those who enter the Pyramid. By the kindness of Dr. Edgar, who introduced us to an Arab Sheik (Judah Fide) of the vicinity, we were privileged to have the gate opened and through it to enter the subterranean chamber.

We went all over the structure again—not, however, with the view of taking measurements, for these, we believe, have already been taken more accurately than instruments then at our command would permit. We merely reviewed this Great Witness to the Lord of hosts and recalled to mind its testimony, which we have already presented to our readers in the last chapter of the third volume of *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*. We again noted with admiration the exactness of the construction of this wonderful "pillar in the land of Egypt." In many places immense stones are so neatly joined together as to make it difficult to find the joint. The quarry from which these large lime-stones were evidently taken has been located to the southeast of the city of Cairo near the old city and citadel. But as for the immense red granite blocks used for the King's chamber and above it, no such stones are found within hundreds of miles—up the Nile.

There was nothing else of special interest to us in that vicinity, except a trip a little further south in the vicinity of ancient Memphis, the ancient capital of Egypt, the ruins of which have been partially uncovered. There we were in the vicinity of the city of On, from which Joseph got his wife, and near the place of his severe trial, testing and exaltation. We called to mind the fact of his being a type of the sufferings of Christ and the coming exaltation of Head and members in the kingdom of the Father.

Embarking at Alexandria again, our thoughts preceded us to Jaffa, ancient Joppa, and to Jerusalem. But arriving at Jaffa we met with a great disappointment. The wind of the night before caused great swells of the sea toward the shore, which made it perilous for the launching of the landing boats for the passengers. The rockiness of the shore also added to the danger. The strength of the waves seemed likely to dash the boats against the rocks regardless of the skill of the boatmen, and the Jaffa boatmen are noted as being amongst the most skillful in the world. Arriving before noon we waited and waited, but no boats ventured out. The signals from the shore indicated that the Government would not permit the risk of life in landing the passengers. The captain of our vessel stated that he could not possibly delay his sailing for the next port beyond 6 p. m., and there were no signs that the weather would improve in the interim.

Of course, this caused considerable disappointment, as we had earnestly desired, and surely expected, that we would celebrate the Lord's Memorial supper in the Holy City in which the Master first broke the bread and drank the cup and gave to his disciples. As we thought the matter over, we concluded that the Lord was giving us a test of faith, and particularly a test of obedience. Would we murmur or complain if he should hinder us from landing, or would we be content with whatever we should see and realize as his guiding hand? Would we learn the lesson which he would teach us? We passed the word around amongst our company of nineteen, increased to twenty by Brother Hall, of the Oriental Commerce Company, who met us and greatly assisted in our journey at the suggestion of some of our mutual friends at London who

had written him respecting us. We all went to the Lord in prayer, telling him that while indeed we would be disappointed, we nevertheless would be submissive and neither murmur nor complain whatever might be the decision of divine providence, but if it pleased the Master to permit us to land we would accept this as a special mark of divine interposition and favor and render thanks accordingly. You will be glad to learn that about 5 o'clock the captain received a signal from shore that if he would come a little nearer the boats would come to us. Thus at 6:10 p. m. we were safely on the boats and half an hour later safely ashore. We all gave the Lord more earnest thanks and appreciated the more our privileges by reason of this little test of submissiveness, we are sure.

OUR VISIT TO JERUSALEM AND VICINITY

We spent the night at Jaffa and took the early morning train for Jerusalem, where we arrived at noon in the midst of a rain and hail storm, declared to be very unusual for the season. But the storm not only settled the dust, but gave us pleasant, cool weather for our visit to the Holy City and surroundings. Brother and Sister Thompson, colporteurs, met us here. For the past two years they have been living in Australia, later visiting some of the cities of India and Egypt. They came to Jerusalem to colporteur and in time to meet us. They will remain there for some time as representatives of the Society to scatter seeds of truth and to water seeds already planted and in general to help forward the cause of the harvest work of the Great Reaper, whom we all love to serve.

Of course, we visited "the Jews' wailing-place" and sympathized with the poor people who there were reading the Book of Jeremiah and the Book of Lamentations and "waiting for the consolation of Israel." We rejoiced to know from the divine Word that their expectations will be more than fully realized shortly now. How glad we felt for them! We visited the place of Pilate's Judgment Hall, where our Master was tried and saw some of the very pavement where the Roman soldiers whiled away the time in playing games, the marks for the games being clearly legible in the cement pavement recently uncovered. We noted the Mohammedan Mosque which covers the site of the Temple, but we were not permitted to enter it, because the time was one of special religious fervor among the Mohammedans, also because of the fact that not long since a fanatic had done injury to a visitor.

A little "baksheesh" gained us admission to some of the native homes, which consist usually of one or two rooms. We were surprised at the entire cleanliness of the inside, the more so because the streets are in a very filthy condition. A journey to Bethlehem, the place of our Savior's birth, was also in order and proved of interest; also a visit to the Dead Sea and to the fords of the Jordan River, where John baptized Jesus, and then to the city of Jericho. On our journey we saw the Brook Cherith, where the Prophet Elijah hid himself for a considerable portion of the three and a half years in which the drought and famine prevailed in the land of Israel. The brook for a considerable distance passes between the high walls of the mountains, in which there are various cliffs and caves occupied by hermits, and at one point there is a Monastery of considerable size under the control of the Greek Catholic church. On this trip we remembered our Lord's parable respecting the good Samaritan and the man who on this road fell among thieves. We had frequently read with astonishment the statement that the Samaritan took out two pence and paid it to the inn-keeper for the care of the wounded man until he would come again. The sum seemed ridiculously small, but when we remember that two pence at that time represented two days' wages, and further when we noticed the character of the inns, that they are ordinary in the extreme, we comprehended the situation.

Our experience on the evening of the Memorial supper was most peculiar. The "upper room," which tradition indicates is the one which Jesus and his Apostles used for the celebration of the Memorial supper, is under the control of Mohammedans. When the time came for us to occupy the room, we were first advised that no chairs could be brought in and that no table could be had, but we were promised rugs for the floor that we might recline after the manner of Jesus and the Apostles, for it would appear that the majority use no tables, but merely lie down upon the floor with their heads toward the center and rest there upon one arm while feeding themselves with the other from a central dish. Later word reached us that we must be very quiet and not indulge in any singing. These restrictions excited our suspicions that there must be a reason for all of this. Nevertheless, at the appointed hour we went to the place.

OUR OBSERVANCE OF THE MEMORIAL

Our coming attracted the attention of some of the Moham-

medans, who rushed wildly hither and thither, gesticulating and objecting, not to us, but to our guide, who had arranged for the use of the room. Seeing the excitement that was being caused, we thought best to indicate the peaceableness of our intentions by quietly withdrawing. We realized that if the fanatical Mohammedans had shouted that the holy place of Mohammed was being desecrated by the Christian dogs, hundreds of deluded people would rush out upon us from every direction and without the intervention of a miracle would injure or kill some or all of us.

We learned later that the room is owned by about fifty Moslems and only two or three had agreed to rent it to us, and that the objection to our presence was raised by others who had an interest in the property and the right to forbid our use of it. Explanations were made that the room had been used by various religious denominations for the commemoration of the Lord's supper, but that difficulties had arisen and all had been forbidden further use of it years ago. To have given us the use of it now, they claimed, would have opened up afresh the controversy which had already been settled, forbidding the use of the room for such purposes.

The evening was showery, but we determined, nevertheless, to go to the Garden of Gethsemane, where our Master and the Apostles were on that memorable night nearly nineteen centuries ago—the garden of our Master's agony and bloody sweat. By unanimous vote the company desired to partake of the Memorial emblems in that sacred spot, which perhaps was never used for such a purpose before. In a drizzling rain we considered the meaning of the bread, representing the broken body of Jesus, and secondly, as explained by the Apostle Paul, the entire church which is the body of Christ—the one loaf which we break. We considered also the cup, which primarily represents the life which our Lord poured out in behalf of us and the world, and which, secondarily, represents to us the wonderful privilege of participating in the sufferings of Christ by drinking of his cup, in becoming partakers of the afflictions of Christ. We recognized also the glory that would follow in the drinking of the cup anew in the Father's kingdom under those blessed conditions. We recounted how the loaf now being broken shall in God's Providence be the bread for the whole world of mankind.

Our hearts were very glad notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather. We offered prayer and thanks for the blessed occasion and the blessed things commemorated, remembering that the Lord's dear ones everywhere were similarly commemorating, or would commemorate, the sufferings of Christ as our Passover slain for us. In quiet tones we sung a verse and then departed with joyful, thankful hearts. The experiences of that evening will surely never fade from our memories, but always speak to us with force of the Lamb of God, who died for the sins of the world, and of our privilege of sharing with him in his sacrifice and as his members and of being glorified with him in the accomplishment of the great work secured through his death.

Our last day in Jerusalem was Sunday, April 24th. It will always be green in our memories this side the veil and doubtless beyond. We visited the Mount of Olives and then traversed the Bethany road, which Jesus and his Apostles so often passed over. We noted the brook Kedron outside the city gate and crossed it. We were especially interested in and impressed by that particular part of the Bethany road where Jesus rode upon the ass accompanied by his disciples and the multitude shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David," also in the spot where our Master stopped the procession when he came in view of the city, and there, weeping over it, declared that Israel's house was left unto her desolate, and that they should see him no more until the day when they would gladly acclaim him their King. Twice we visited this spot and rejoiced in spirit as we thought of the fact that the time for the opening of the eyes of Israel and of all the families of the earth is now at hand. Thank God for the assurance that "then all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped"!

INTEREST IN THE TRUTH AWAKENED IN THE HOLY CITY

Mr. Hall, acting under advice and suggestions of our mutual friends at London, had engaged a large public hall and had advertised that we would speak there on Sunday afternoon. It should be remarked here that the progressive element of the population includes those of European birth and these and the American colony reside in that part of the city which is outside the wall, where everything is much more progressive than inside the wall. Our audience was composed of this progressive class, Catholics, Protestants, Jews and Mohammedans. Our hearts went out to them in sympathy as we thought how error has separated millions of honest-minded

people of every nationality and class. We rejoiced in the thought of the coming time of divine favor—"Times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, when he shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached, and whom the heavens must retain until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."—Acts 3:19-21.

We spoke for awhile along the lines of the Message of the Angel at Bethlehem, telling of "the good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people." We reverted to the fact that all people of all religious beliefs are looking for and hoping for the coming of the Great Deliverer, and that the great deliverance and the desire of all nations is near at hand. Then we spoke more particularly to the Jews, using as our text the "Double" mentioned by the Prophets Jeremiah, Zechariah and Isaiah, explaining how the double of Israel's experiences would reach full accomplishment in 1915 and that there divine favor for the Jews would be manifested and subsequently all the gracious promises made to them would have fulfillment. We showed that the promises which belong to the church are spiritual and separate and distinct from those made to Abraham, the prophets and Israel, but that the blessings of Israel are necessarily delayed until the promises made to spiritual Israel shall reach accomplishment, and that this would be fulfilled during the time of Israel's second experience or double.

The owner of the hall is a converted Jew. He seemed wonderfully interested and astonished at the simplicity of the divine program as outlined. He is the editor of a paper published at Jerusalem and printed in the Arabic language, and has received Government permission also to publish a paper in the Hebrew language. He has been waiting for this for fourteen years. He received this permission just in time to begin the announcement of the good tidings of great joy to all people through God's New Covenant with Israel. He will at once begin the investigation of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. His wife and another friend are deeply interested also. Another Hebrew Christian, formerly a minister, now superannuated, was present. He and his wife expressed very deep interest and full sympathy with all that they heard, and will begin reading at once along these lines. Thus with Brother and Sister Thompson at work, there is already a nucleus for the starting of a Berean Bible Class in the City of the Great King.

Other influential Jews were reported present and gave close attention. One of these, Doctor Levy, is the general manager and a very leading spirit among the Zionists of Palestine. He expressed a very keen interest in what he heard and said, "Alas, few of you Christian people hold such kind and liberal views toward the Hebrews!" He declared his intention of investigating the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, and in various ways gave evidence of his earnestness and sincerity. He suggested that he would write to some of his Jewish friends in America and invite attention to the message which he had heard. He remarked to one of his friends, "Surely the speaker of the occasion is a Prophet whom the Lord has raised up to set forth this message."

Leaving Jerusalem the next morning we remembered the words of the Psalmist, "Go about the city, mark well her bulwarks"; and again his words, "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth and forever." (Psa. 125:2) We can well see that the city of Jerusalem, located as it is, in the top of the mountains, and flanked by them in every direction, would be a difficult one for an enemy to successfully attack. The mountain roads would be difficult of approach because easily defended. The suggestion of the Prophet that the Lord is as a fortress and protection to his people under every adverse influence, is a beautiful one which all can appreciate.

Returning to Jaffa we found time to visit the house of Simon the tanner by the seaside. There stood the old stone trough such as was used by tanners in working out their

leather. From all appearances it may have stood there for centuries. The building is surely not the same one that Simon lived in, on the housetop of which St. Peter had the vision of the sheet let down full of all manner of four-footed creatures. Nevertheless, in all probability it is the old building repaired and, in general appearance, size, etc., its counterpart. We also visited the tomb of Dorcas; respecting its identity there seems to be comparatively little doubt.—Acts 9:36.

We were much interested in the orange groves of Jaffa, which seem thrifty and prosperous. The fruit is among the best we have ever eaten. The demand for these oranges, we understand, is chiefly from Great Britain and Egypt. Already the country is beginning to resume a prosperous condition, so graphically described in the Bible by the words, "a land flowing with milk and honey."

Mr. Hall called our attention to a new traction engine and gang plow which plows twelve furrows at one time and harrows and seeds the ground at the same time. Its capacity is forty acres per day and it can be used subsequently in connection with the reaping and the threshing of the grain. It seems astounding that this land, which at one bound emerges from the use of a crooked stick for plowing, takes up the most modern plow in the world, the cost of which is \$7,500.

OUR VISIT TO THE LAND OF GOSHEN AND THE RED SEA

On our return journey the vessel stopped at Port Said, and we concluded to embrace the opportunity to have a look at the land of Goshen, and at the course which the Israelites took when they left there for the Promised Land. Our train brought us to Ismailia, formerly known as Succoth, one of the assembling points of the Israelites in their flight. The train between Ismailia and Port Abraham took us along the line of the Suez Canal, where evidently at one time the Red Sea prolonged itself into the Bitter Lakes. Undoubtedly we traversed the very ground over which the host of Israel passed in their flight from Pharaoh. Not yet content, we engaged passage across the northernmost part of the Red Sea, called the Gulf of Suez, and on the other side rode for about three hours on donkeys until we came to the springs of Moses, the traditional spot where the Israelites, thirsty, found brackish water, which Moses made sweet by thrusting a tree into it. How wonderful it seemed to have before our very eyes the corroboration of the Bible narrative! It was strengthening to our faith; we trust the record of it will be helpful to many.

By the way, we here remark that it is not at all necessary to exaggerate the miracle of the crossing of the Red Sea by the Israelites by supposing that it was at the widest part, nor is it necessary to suppose that its waters stood up like a garden wall on either side of the Israelites' pathway as they crossed. A wall is a barrier, and anything which will serve as a barricade is properly enough described as a wall. The Bible record is that God caused a strong east wind to blow, and, standing on the spot, we could imagine how the sea, where the Suez canal now is, was once an effectual barrier to the Israelites, hindering their progress, and that under divine providence the wind could very easily make bare a sandbar and provide the necessary crossing, and that a reversal of the wind would cause the return of the waters to their former place, overwhelming the Egyptians. Alas! that humanity in general is so much more disposed to discredit the Bible history and accept instead, the suggestions of the Babylonians and Egyptians. Thus far our confidence in the Bible as the inspired record of the divine plan of the ages grows stronger day by day.

As we write we are on the Mediterranean approaching Naples, and have received advice informing us that we are advertised to speak in the city of Rome May 1st in the chapel of the Y. M. C. A. If such be the divine will we shall be glad; if not, we shall be content and go on our journey seeking others who have a hearing ear, and for such opportunities as the divine providence may indicate. Of these we hope to write you later.

THE GIFTS AND CALLING TO ISRAEL

"For this cause he [Christ] is the Mediator of the New Testament [Covenant], that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first Testament [Covenant], they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."—Heb. 9:15.

The Apostle, we must remember, was addressing Christian Hebrews who were in perplexity in respect to the Law Covenant. That Covenant had existed for more than sixteen centuries, and the Jews had supposed all along that under it they were to be God's favored people and accomplish all the work that was first brought to light in the Covenant made with

Abraham. Many of the Hebrews, therefore, after coming into Christ, accepting him as the Redeemer, felt that somehow they must still maintain their relationship to the Law Covenant, its ordinances, etc. The Apostle, in his Epistle to the Galatians, attempted to counteract this erroneous theory, which he calls a Judaizing influence. He told them that if any of those

who were Gentiles by birth should in their mistaken zeal and earnestness become Jews by being circumcised, thus coming under the domination of the Law Covenant, they would thereby be indicating that they had forfeited their standing in Christ; and, as he pronounced it, Christ would profit them nothing.—Gal. 5:2.

In his Epistle to the Hebrews St. Paul wished the Christian Hebrew brethren to take the larger, broader, truer thought respecting the Law Covenant and everything pertaining to it—its sacrifices, its mediator, its law. He wished them to recognize it as merely a typical covenant; that it prefigured a New Covenant; that its mediator typified a better Mediator, The Christ; that its bulls and goats of sin-offering typified the better sacrifices by which the New Covenant would become operative, the better sacrifices being those of the better Mediator—Jesus the Head and the church his body.

St. Paul had already pointed out that the privileges of this Gospel age, so far as the church is concerned, are chiefly those of sacrifice—that “if we suffer with Christ, we shall reign with him; if we be dead with him, we shall live with him”; that we must seek to copy him in self-denial and self-sacrifice and be baptized into his death, if we would share his Kingly honor, his service as the great Prophet, Priest, and King of the Millennial age, to bless Israel and all the families of the earth.

In his endeavor to make this matter plain (Hebrews 9:13, 14), St. Paul points out that before the Law Covenant went into effect, it was necessary that blood should be shed; saying, “For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” Here is a contrast between the institution of the Law Dispensation, the Law Covenant, and the institution of the New Covenant. And the first effect of this better blood which is to seal the New Covenant is to cleanse our consciences from dead works. The Apostle does not here refer to it as having been for all Israel, but for those Jews who had become Christians but had been bound by the Law previously, that they might see that now the true sacrifice had come; that this was sufficient to satisfy all the claims of justice and put away from their minds all consciousness of sin, to assure them that all of their sins were thus covered and that they might now render acceptable service to the living God. “And for this same cause [that is, because his blood was sufficient to cancel all sin] he is the Mediator of the New Testament.” He has not only purged us from a consciousness of sin, that we may serve God and become members of the body of Christ and accept him as our Advocate and trust in his finished work on our behalf, but he has by the same sacrifice made such an arrangement with God and with Justice as will constitute him the Mediator of the New Covenant for all Israel. The Apostle is not here saying that the New Covenant is operative now, nor that we are under this Covenant; quite to the contrary. He is speaking of the Jewish nation, as we shall see.

The remainder of the fifteenth verse (Heb. 9) declares, “By means of death for the redemption of transgressions that were under the first Testament [or Law Covenant], they which are called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.” We are not, therefore, to consider the ones here “called” as referring to those who receive the High Calling—joint-heirship with Christ, the spiritual seed of Abraham—but we are to understand the Apostle here to mean the Jewish nation that was called—all of this Jewish nation who would come into accord with the divine arrangement. The same Apostle (Rom. 11:27) says, “For the gifts and the calling of God are not to be repented of.” That is to say, God having called the Jewish nation to be his peculiar people, having made them definite promises respecting the blessing of all nations, has no thought or intention of abrogating those promises. Every covenant, every promise that God has ever made and every thing that he has ever done, he has foreknown its full import and its results, and he has done nothing hastily. Israel, therefore, is the nation which he has foreknown to be the one he will use in connection with his work of blessing all the families of the earth; as the Apostle says (Romans 11:27), “For this is my covenant with them, when I shall take away their sins.”

THE BLINDNESS UPON THE JEWISH NATION IS A MYSTERY

In the 25th verse of the same chapter he informs us that the blindness upon the Jewish nation, until the fulness of the Gospel church has come in, is a mystery. God is now gathering out only a special few of the Jews and a special few from all nations to constitute the spiritual Israel, to whom

appertain the highest feature of this Abrahamic Covenant or promise; and then, as soon as this Spiritual Israel, which will constitute the Prophet, Priest and King, is complete, the Deliverer—taken from Jew and Gentile—shall come forth. That will be the fulfillment of the promise that “the Deliverer shall come forth out of Zion and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob,” for this is God’s covenant with them, with the seed of Jacob; as we read (Jer. 31:31), “After those days, saith the Lord, I will make a New Covenant with the House of Israel and with the House of Judah.” This thought is confirmed when we consider the fact that the Gospel church were not all under the first testament or first covenant, but only the Jewish nation.

The trend of the Apostle’s argument, therefore, is that Christ, the Mediator of the New Testament, becomes such by means of death for the redemption of the transgressions under the first Testament, or Law Covenant. In other words, the Jewish nation needed to be redeemed in a special manner before God could use it as his channel for blessing the other nations.

Since the Mediatorial work of the Millennial kingdom is to be accomplished through natural Israel, and since all the families of the earth are to be blessed through them, it follows that nothing can be done until Israel shall have been recovered from their present outcast condition. Then the blessing of the Lord will go forth and the Mediatorial work will be accomplished through natural Israel. We are to distinguish between the work to be done through this nation and the One who will do that work. It will be the Mediator of the New Covenant who will have the power to confer the blessings—the Great High Priest, the Great Prophet, the Great King, the Great Mediator. There could be no blessing outside of this Great One; and this Great One, as the Apostle Paul and all other Apostles clearly show, is composed of Jesus the Head and the church his body.

THE NEW COVENANT TO BE MADE WITH THE JEWS

No doubt many Jews are now faithless and unbelieving because of the long period of blindness upon them, and perhaps in their hearts are hungering after the promises. When the light of the New Dispensation shall begin to dawn upon the world; when they shall begin to see the resurrected ancient worthies as recipients of divine favor; when they shall see their brethren beginning to be blessed under the ministration of this new kingdom, then many of the Jews who are now blinded and unbelieving will manifest true faith and be obedient and turn unto the Lord. But we are not to understand that any one will become an Israelite unless he has the faith of Abraham, sincere faith, trust in God, faith that will be manifested by obedience.

Then, as the people of the various nations shall gather themselves to the Lord and seek to come into harmony with him, the way of approach will be by coming into accord with the Holy Nation—God’s representative kingdom in the world—and thus they will come into harmony with the spiritual Christ, the Great Prophet, Priest and King. Eventually, by the close of the Millennial age, those who prove faithful will be turned over to God, even the Father. Such will then be fully in accord with Jehovah and fully in Covenant relationship with him.

The New Covenant is not to be made with any others than the Jews, for no others were in Covenant relationship with God. The words “New Covenant” seem, therefore, to indicate the repetition of God’s favor to Israel under the better Mediator, who will bring the glorious blessings that they had expected under Moses, but failed to obtain because of the inability of Moses to make satisfaction for their sins; for the blood of bulls and goats could never actually take away their sins. The antitypes of these, the sacrifice of the Lord and the members of his body, must first be accomplished before this New Covenant with Israel could supersede the old or Law Covenant, which it then will do.

Hebrews 9:16 reads: “For where a Testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.” In the case of Moses the death of the testator was represented by the slaying of the bullock and the goat. In the case of the Antitypical Moses, the death of the testator is shown in the sacrifice of our Lord and the church his body. The ability of Christ to give a testament or covenant, or to make a covenant, should also be seen. As the man Jesus he could not make this covenant. Why? Because as a man—not spirit-begotten—he could merely have given his human life for mankind and then would have had nothing left for himself; or if he had retained his earthly life he could have established only an earthly kingdom and never could have given eternal life to any one subsequently. He might have blessed them with wise laws and

regulations and improved conditions over the present time, but never could have given them life and the perfections and blessings that he will be able to give under the New Covenant.

HOW THE LORD BECAME A TESTATOR

In order to be a testator and give eternal life to the world, it was necessary that our Lord should carefully follow the plan that God had arranged: First, by his own obedience he should demonstrate his loyalty to God and receive life on the divine plane as his reward; second, that then, by taking up his human life which he did not forfeit in anywise, he should have that human life and its rights to give to Israel and through them to all mankind. He is thus a Testator. He is thus one who bequeaths something to others. He bequeaths it not while he is alive, as a gift, but he gives it as a Testator, as that with which he parts in death. So our Lord Jesus, as the Great Mediator of the New Covenant, will give to mankind the human rights and privileges to which he had a right by virtue of his perfect obedience to the divine law. He invites us, not to share those rights with the world, not to come under his Mediatorial reign and be sharers in restitution privileges, but, according to the will of God, to do something else, viz., to join with him in becoming testator, to lay down our lives and thus be sharers with him in the spirit of his great work, that we may also share with him in the actual features of that work during the Millennium.

The very first difficulty encountered is that we, unlike him, have not perfect bodies that we could give as perfect sacrifices; hence God's arrangement for those who have this sacrificing attitude of mind is that they may be dealt with by the Lord Jesus and that he may, as their Advocate, impute to them his merit, his restitution rights, to make up for, to off-set, their blemishes and imperfections, that they may offer unto God a sacrifice that would be pleasing. We see that he does not give to these who are now called, either the Mediatorial blessings of the Millennial age or the restitution conditions which that Mediatorial reign will confer. He gives to them that which will serve his purpose for them much better; viz., an imputation of his merit for past sins, to allow their sacrifice to pass the divine propitiatory satisfactorily. Even then their sacrifice would prove imperfect and unsatisfactory because of inability to carry it out to a completion, did he not continue to be their Advocate. With every blemish and imperfection that is unwillingly theirs they can go to him as their Advocate and obtain mercy and have the cleansing from all sin through the merit of his sacrifice.

THE JEWS "WILL OBTAIN MERCY THROUGH YOUR MERCY"

Thus we see the great Testament which is in Christ's blood and to which he refers, saying, "This is my blood of the New Testament." Instead of applying that blood of the New Testament to the world or to Israel, he applied it first for the church. It must all pass through the church, so to speak. "Drink ye all of it"; be ye all sharers in my cup, for unless

ye are sharers in my cup, ye cannot be sharers in my life. It is his cup; and he gives us a share of it. We are not worthy to have any direct dealings with the Father, but the Father, nevertheless, had us in mind from "before the foundation of the world," as the Apostle says. (Eph. 1:4) Hence we are not to understand the Mystery—the selection of the church, the body of Christ—as being an amplification of the original divine plan, but merely the carrying out of a part of that plan not previously disclosed or revealed.

So, then, it requires all of the Gospel age for the church of Christ to drink his "cup" and be "baptized into his death." When the last member shall have drunk of this cup and shall have been baptized into his death, and shall have finished his course, then all the sufferings of the Priest, Head and body, will have been accomplished—the sufferings to which the Lord refers through the prophets as "the sufferings of Christ and the glory that shall follow." The sufferings began with the Head and have continued all the way down to all the members of the body; and as soon as these sufferings shall have been finished The Christ will be crowned with glory, honor and immortality beyond the veil.

When we drink of this cup of the New Testament—his blood or sacrificed life—we have communion [participation] in the death of Christ. (1 Cor. 10:16, 17) We are also to be participants in his special life on the divine plane (1 John 3:2), and thus sharers with him in this work of making the testament, or covenant, which will go to Israel and through Israel to the world. This is further admitted by the Apostle in Romans 11:25-28. Speaking of the time when Israel shall be recovered from their sins, when the Deliverer, The Christ, Head and body, "shall come forth out of Zion and turn away ungodliness from Jacob," when God will make his covenant with them and take away their sins, the Apostle adds, "They shall obtain mercy through your mercy."—Rom. 11:31.

This will be the mercy of God operating through Jesus and the mercy of Jesus operating through the church. So it will be God's mercy in one sense; it will be Jesus' mercy in another sense; and it will be the church's mercy in a third sense. This mercy will go to the Jews. What mercy is this? It is this New Testament. How? Through the death of the Testator, Christ the Head, and the church the body. And what will Israel get by this testament or will? The earthly life and earthly rights which The Christ laid down in sacrifice; all will go to Israel. All those rights to life eternal, and all those things lost in Adam and redeemed by Christ, will go to Israel alone—in fact, to none of them but Israelites, indeed. So during the Millennial age it will be necessary for all mankind to come to these people of God to get eternal life and to share in this testament or will of Christ—in order to become Israelites indeed, that they may thus be heirs of this will, which gives eternal human life and all the earthly rights which Jesus had and sacrificed, and which he imputed to us, and allowed us to join in sacrificing together with him.

PRAYING FOR ONE ANOTHER

"If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death. I do not say that he shall pray for it."—1 John 5:16.

Here the Apostle wishes us to understand that if we see a brother who is overtaken in a fault and getting into difficulty which may lead to coldness and estrangement from the Lord, we should pray for such a one; we should ask the Lord's blessing upon him; we should, as a member of the body, do all in our power for his assistance. If in the human body one hand becomes wounded or bruised, the other goes to its relief to allay the suffering and restore the member. It would care for and express sympathy for the wounded hand. So we, as members of the body of Christ, are privileged to pray for one another; to pray for all those who we have reason to believe are fellow-members in the body.

This is different from praying for the world—asking God to accept and beget of his Spirit those who are not in the proper condition. We are satisfied that God has accepted the one class and that in going away from him they are doing violence to the principles of righteousness, and to their covenant and, therefore, are correspondingly going against his will. We may very properly ask guidance for them and wisdom for ourselves that we may speak and act aright. The divine intention in suggesting that we should pray for one in this attitude, might be that it would aid in developing our sympathy for the various members of the body and thus help us to scrutinize ourselves that we might be more sympathetic towards one another and have the greater care for one another's interests.

Concerning that portion of the text which says, "He shall

give him life for them that sin not unto death," in what sense or to what degree the Lord permits us to be advocates one for another is not clear; but our advocacy of each other would seemingly be offered more particularly to the Head of the body than to the Father. But even if it be supposed that our advocacy of the case of a brother would be heard by the Father directly, it would still not seem to be due in any sense to worthiness on our part; but because of our standing in the body of Christ God has arranged a method by which he is pleased to exercise an interest in the various members of the Body in harmony with prayer for such members. We might then ask, What would be the result if there were no members present to pray for a disaffected brother? Would God allow him to go down into the second death because no one living in that neighborhood knew about his case? The answer is that the Lord himself is the Head of the Body and quite probably if there were no other members who would be in the attitude of intercession and sympathy, the great Head of the body would find some means of advocating the interests of the disaffected member. It could not be that the Lord would allow any member of his Body to perish simply for lack of our attention or prayers.

THOSE GIVEN OVER TO THE ADVERSARY FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FLESH

We might include in this general thought the "great company" and the manner in which the Lord deals with them.

They are really out of the way so far as the high calling is concerned, but the great Advocate has endorsed their case, therefore he will not suffer them to be condemned with the world, but instead, will provide chastening experiences which will, if rightly received, be helpful to them and ultimately bring them off conquerors.

The Apostle brings before our attention, in speaking of one who had committed a serious trespass, that the church should have judged him; that he should have been brought before the church and been reproved for his course. Since the church had failed to do its duty, the Apostle, being absent in person, but present in spirit, as one of them, had judged this individual and "delivered him over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." This saving of the spirit in the day of the Lord Jesus, as apparently relating to the great company, would seem to correspond with the expression in the text that the Lord would "give him life," would preserve his life. The thought then is that if he were in danger of going down into the second death the faithful prayer would lead to such a recovery of the individual as would bring him to the place where he would have the proper view of matters, and in that sense of the word would bring him back to the "life" standing, because life can be lost only by willfully and intentionally disobeying the divine arrangements. If, therefore, the person has not willingly and deliberately betrayed his trust, and gone back on the blood of the covenant wherewith he was once sanctified, there is always a possibility of recovering such a one to a proper view. If his heart is right, a proper view of the situation would be sufficient for him. The Lord will always be willing to help all such and we may reasonably suppose that he would render this aid whether we pray for it or not. If we neglect our interest in and care over the fellow-members, it is our loss; the Head would not neglect his interest and care over them; but all such as might be going in the direction of the second death would be recoverable only up to the point where their hearts go wrong.

Now we come to the latter part of the verse, "There is a sin unto death; I do not say that he should pray for it." We are to understand that this sin unto death is something that is very specific. It is a matter of willfulness and is a turning again to the beggarly elements of the world from which we were once recovered, from which we once escaped. And what are the beggarly elements of the world? Some might suppose that the beggarly elements of the world are murder, robbery, etc. We answer, Yes. Are we to expect, then, that a Christian would turn to robbery and murder? And would this be a sign of his having lost the Lord's Spirit—not merely that he is losing it, but that he has lost it, that he is dead? We answer, Yes. And how would it manifest itself? We answer, Our Lord gives a more refined definition of murder. To be angry with a brother without just cause—to have hatred, envy, malice, strife; these are the works of the flesh and the devil. Whoever has these—that is to say, whoever is actuated by these, not merely in a moment of impulse and through some oversight in the care of his tongue, as mentioned in an illustration recently, but whoever deliberately and repeatedly manifests these as his own spirit and thought, has certainly lost the Spirit of the Lord, if he ever had it, if he had not been merely glossed over with an outward veneer of meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness and love. His loss of these qualities and his taking on of the vicious qualities, backbiting, slander, anger, malice, strife, etc., would indicate that he had lost the Spirit of the Lord. It would signify that he is not dying, but that he is dead.—Jude 12.

Going back to the illustration of the dog, which we used in a previous issue, we see a difference between this condition of willfulness and the one in which the New Creature might be temporarily overtaken in a fault and his "dog," so to speak, break loose and bite some one. The "dog" would get a whipping, and apologies would be made to the person injured and things made good so far as possible. The one who approves of his dog's going out and biting his brethren or neighbors has evidently lost the Spirit of Christ which he once had.

THOSE FOR WHOM WE SHOULD NOT PRAY

Now, should we pray for such? The Apostle says, "I do not say that you should agonize for these." No; it would evidently be worse than a waste of time for Christians to pray and agonize and labor for such. There are plenty of more hopeful cases. If you had some trees in your yard, and you should see one looking a little withered or sickly, you might dig around it, fertilize it, water it, etc., but if, upon examination, you found it dead down at the roots, you would

say, No need to use more fertilizer for it. So with this matter of prayer and laboring with those who have lost the Spirit of Christ and have developed, instead, a vicious spirit of the Adversary; it is worse than a waste of time to have anything more to do with them.

We might ask: What would be the best evidence to one's self that he had not committed the "sin unto death?" We occasionally come across people who believe that they have committed the "sin unto death" and usually they are in a very distressed condition of mind. We cannot say to these positively that the mere fact that they are distressed in mind is a proof that they have not committed "the sin unto death" in view of the typical lesson of Esau, "that profane person who sold his birthright," and of whom we read that he sought it earnestly and with tears, but did not recover it. Similarly, in view of the case of Judas Iscariot: his penitence for having betrayed the Lord, and his return of the money and hanging himself as an evidence of his deep remorse. What, then, shall we say to such?

In our own experience with these it has generally been the case that those who thought they had committed "the sin unto death," had really done nothing of the kind, so far as our judgment goes. Our method, therefore, is to try to show them that what they did was not done willfully or intelligently against God and his will. We ask: "Did you mean to do thus and so?" After catechising them along the course that seemed to them to constitute "the sin unto death" one will usually succeed in showing them that nothing that they have done was willfully, intentionally, knowingly done, and that the fact that they regret it and that the attitude of their heart and their intention now is still in accord with the Lord, shows that the adversary is merely endeavoring to shake their faith and confidence and to turn them aside.

We consider that a good method of dealing further with such persons is to say, "Now, if you have lost the Lord's Spirit, you will be loveless towards those of his people with whom you come in contact, and if you still have his Spirit you will not be harsh and implacable, but desirous of serving them. You will be kind, gentle, long-suffering and thus manifest that you still have the Spirit of Christ. If you have the Spirit of Christ, that is a sign that you are his. If you are without this special mark of the Lord's Spirit it is an evidence that you are not one of his."

In some cases that we have known, the conditions seemed to imply that the persons had really lost the Lord's Spirit, for they confessed to special hardness of heart, no love, no sympathy, only bitter feeling. We could say but very little more to such, but merely advise them to try to take a different view of the matter and to progress to a better condition. We have suggested that perhaps they were physically impaired, or in some melancholy condition of mind, of which the Lord would not take note as being their real spirit or intention, and there we were obliged to leave it.

We have been asked if we understand Esau to be a type of the second death class or of the great company. It is probable that Esau was not a type of those that go into the second death. He is spoken of as profane—that is, not spiritual, and the Apostle seems to use him as representing the natural man. In his outward appearance of hairiness, etc., the animal man, apparently, was pictured. The Lord through the Apostle may merely have been designing to show that though the natural Jew was offered these wonderful privileges of the spiritual things he would prefer the natural things. We know that the Apostle likens the whole Jewish nation to Esau "who sold his birthright," and yet the same Apostle proceeds to tell us that this whole Jewish nation will by and by be recovered and come into special blessings under the New Covenant. We may presume that these were not worthy of the spiritual blessings, and that this is the reason they were looked upon as of the Esau class and not of the class who get the spiritual blessings. They preferred the earthly, so we believe there will be earthly blessings for them in due time. If, when the earthly blessings of the Millennium are offered to this Esau class, they will not profit by the lessons and disciplinings and come to a right spirit, they will be destroyed; but if they do respond to the Lord's providences and the chastenings of the Lord in the Millennial kingdom, they will gradually rise and lose their bestiality; their stony heart will be taken away, and instead they will receive a "heart of flesh."

So in our judgment Esau represented merely the natural man, the natural Jew, and did not represent either the "great company" or those who will go into the "second death" during this Gospel age.

"A CRUMB FROM THE CHILDREN'S TABLE"

MATTHEW 15:21-28.—JUNE 12.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"Great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

God loves the faithful and delights to have them trust in him. His chiefest blessings are for such. By reason of various conditions connected with our birth, it is not alike easy to all to accept the divine promises and to shape life according to these, trusting that the rewards and blessings of the future will more than offset the sacrifices of the present. However, while only the faithful will attain the exceeding great and precious things of God's promises in this present age, we are glad that the Creator has still in reservation an inferior blessing for those who cannot exercise faith now, but who must be dealt with during the Millennial age more along the lines of sight. Our present study well illustrates the Lord's grace towards those who trust him.

The Canaanitish woman was a heathen woman—one not an Israelite—one with whom the Lord had not entered into covenant relationship—one of those who at that time were without God and without hope, because the Divine provision for the blessing of the Gentiles was not yet opened up to them. When our Lord sent forth his Apostles to preach the Gospel, healing all manner of diseases and casting out devils, he instructed them to pass by all who were not Jews—Gentiles and Samaritans. His words were, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not, for I am not sent save to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." With a few exceptions our Lord's miracles were confined to the Jews. They alone were God's covenanted people. For this reason Jesus ignored the petition of the Canaanitish woman, crying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." And later on he explained, "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," and "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs."

PRAYING FOR A BITE

The term "dogs" was applied to the Gentiles by the Jews as signifying their inferiority. Our Lord merely made use of an expression common in his day, and still common in Palestine. But note the woman's faith: She replied, "Yea, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the master's table." What perseverance, what faith, was thus manifested! How evidently she believed the Lord to be the promised Messiah, the Heir of the throne of David! As Jesus intimated, she had more faith than a majority of the Jews. Her request was granted—"O woman, great is thy faith! Be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Her daughter was healed from that hour.

There are several lessons for us in this study. However degraded we may be by nature, by heredity, by environment; however outcast from God's favor, we may still know of the divine compassion. The message is, "God is love." If he chose first of all to manifest his favor towards Abraham's

children, it did not signify that he had no love or care for the remainder of mankind; merely that the divine purpose must flow out to mankind through divinely-appointed channels and in God's due time. We may be sure that when we get to the standpoint of perfect knowledge in the hereafter we shall see wisdom in every feature of the divine program. For instance, from the human standpoint it seems strange that God has permitted a reign of sin and death in the world for 6000 years, when he has the full power to speak the word and to overthrow the forces of evil and to inaugurate gracious influences of blessing for the deliverance of mankind from the power of sin and Satan, ignorance and superstition; to give light for darkness; knowledge of God for ignorance and blindness. Studying the divine plan of the ages, we find the lesson to be that God will first select a church class and subsequently use the elect church as channels of blessing toward the world of mankind.

A little while, and the permission of sin and the trials and difficulties of the present life shall have served to chisel and polish the "very elect." A little while, and they shall be transformed to the glorious likeness of their Redeemer beyond the veil. And then a little while, and the blessings long-promised to the world in general will be dispensed. The children of God will first be fed from this table, and then not merely crumbs will fall for the remainder of the race, but rich and bountiful provision, exceedingly and absolutely more than we could have asked or thought.

AFFLICTED OF THE DEVIL

It is a great and important truth that many human beings are more or less completely obsessed by evil spirits—demons—not the spirits of human beings, but the fallen angels, as the Scriptures declare. Many battle for years against these influences of demons and, because not rightly informed of the Bible teaching on the subject, they come more and more under the occult influences with danger of entirely losing their reason. It was probably some such affliction as this which affected the daughter of the Canaanites. She seemed to realize that there was only the one quarter from which she could get help. Hence her importunity, when she recognized the Lord.

In another sense of the word all sin and sickness may be said to be afflictions of the devil, because all are either directly, or through heredity, Satan's work. Thus our Lord declared that Satan had murdered our race by his falsehood to mother Eve—"He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth." Through his lie our race has gone down into sickness, mental, moral and physical, and is going down rapidly to the tomb. Thank God for the great Deliverer; thank God also, for his great day of deliverance, the Millennial age, now nigh at hand!

THE FIRE OF THE DAY OF THE LORD

"The earth . . . and the works therein shall be burned up."—2 Pet. 3:10.

If this text were the only one bearing upon the subject of the fire of this Day of the Lord we would conclude that it should be considered as literal; but it is not the only Scripture. Many other Scriptures which refer to this same fire show clearly that it is a symbolic fire of destruction that is coming. We can see that fire is very properly a symbol of destruction and is so used throughout the Scriptures—the lake of fire, for instance, "which is the second death." (Rev. 20:14) We find that many Scriptures refer to the coming time of trouble. Some refer to it as a whirlwind of trouble; others as a tempest and flood—a flood shall sweep away the hiding places; mountains shall be removed and carried into the midst of the sea, etc.—as though there would be great earthquakes and sinking of the earth and flooding of the whole world. Yet other Scriptures speak of it as a burning fire. Manifestly it cannot be all three of these in a literal sense. Then there are other Scriptures which show that these expressions are used in a symbolic sense; for instance (Zephaniah 3:8, 9), "Wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy." This seems to be a literal pouring out of something and a consuming of the earth with literal fire. But that it is not literal fire is proven by the very next sentence, which declares, "Then will I turn unto the people a pure language (message) that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." Evidently the people would

not remain if the earth is to be consumed with literal fire. But if, as the Scriptures show, the fire be symbolic, it is plain that people will still be here after the trouble. Then the Lord will, according to his promise, turn to them the pure message.

THE BABEL OF VOICES IN CHRISTENDOM

At the present time the message that the people receive is represented in many creeds, probably hundreds in all; hence the message is a very indistinct one and the Scriptures represent it as "Babel," or confusion. One tongue or voice cries that the message of the Lord is free grace; another tongue or voice says it is election; a third says that only a few will get salvation; while another declares salvation will be universal; a fifth informs us that election is with water, and that without the water no one will be saved. So a variety of voices is heard, and the poor world is not able to determine which is the truth. As a matter of fact they all have so much error that they condemn themselves in the minds of all reasonable people who have not been born in prejudice and steeped in error. When the Lord will turn this pure message to the people, Babylon will no longer be. She will have come to her end. The voice of the Lord will be known through the glorified church, "And the Spirit and the bride shall say, 'Come!' And whosoever will may come and drink of the water of life freely!" (Rev. 22:17) The bride class are now on probation that it may be determined which will eventually be of that class. When the marriage of the Lamb shall have taken place, it will be the work of the "Spirit and the Bride to say 'Come' . . . and whosoever will may take of the water of life freely."

This will be after the "burning" time is over; hence it proves that the fire refers to a time of trouble—a time of destruction against iniquity. The Lord's anger will burn against all kinds of injustice and iniquity. Wrong doing, and wrong-doers will then be punished.

The Apostle's statement respecting the church implies that this judgment, or testing, or fiery trial will begin with the church and extend to the world. If it "begin first with us" what will the end be to those who make no pretense of following the Gospel message? The Apostle again states that the "fire of that day shall try every man's work of what sort it is." (1 Cor. 3:13) This we understand to refer especially to the Church. Every one in the church is to be tried; his work is to be tried. However, in great measure it will be a

trying time for all the world as well; all iniquity and injustice will be exposed, reprobated and destroyed. We see increasing instances of this of late—in the number of fire insurance presidents, for instance, who have been exposed. Fiery trials came upon them as the result of exposures etc. Some of these men were undoubtedly hastened to the tomb, "burned" to death, we might say, by fiery trials. And a great deal of burning, heart-burning, and headaches and prostration are caused today by various exposures of one kind or another as the time advances. No doubt that Day will bring forth further developments and trouble until the prophecies respecting it shall have been completely fulfilled—until the picture of utter destruction of everything evil, both root and branch, is carried out.—Mal. 4:1.

THE NEW MIND VS. THE MIND OF THE FLESH

"To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."—Rom. 8:6.

There is a distinction between the new mind and the new will which we all must recognize. The new will is the determination of the new mind. There must be some mind there in order to have a will, in order to reach a determination, and there must be knowledge upon which a will can be intelligently exercised. We are "born in sin and shapen in iniquity" (Psa. 51:5); we have this natural tendency to begin with. Our minds, at first conformed to earthly things, generally take the earthly view of matters, the selfish view. Then the Lord, through his providences, brings certain propositions to our attention and sets before us that there is another way, "a more excellent way," that God is now holding out a special prize to those who will live contrary to the flesh and according to his will.

When this proposition reaches the individual, our Lord says that he should "sit down and count the cost." He should not rashly say, "Yes, yes"; but he should deliberate as to what this means—the cost in self-denials and the giving up of earthly preferences. After having counted the cost, and after having made the consecration his will or determination should be so set as not to allow it either to favor the flesh or to be guided by the flesh. He should resolve that henceforth whatever is God's will shall be his will, whether he understand all about that will or not. He must, however, see the outlines of the divine will and something of the advantages accruing, before he can form the decision. This is the class which the Father accepts and begets of his holy Spirit.

The new mind may sometimes be misled by false reasoning of the flesh. Our natural minds have their preferences, ambitions, aims and desires and they sometimes argue about certain things and say "God never intended that that should be given up; God would not expect you to do anything so unreasonable as that!" And so, perhaps, the new creature is deceived, and allows the flesh to have its way; but just so surely as it is a New Mind it has not intelligently nor wilfully assented to a wrong course; but, as the Apostle says, "Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me." (Rom. 7:11) So there is a continual battle on the part of the new will, the new creature, after being begotten of the holy Spirit, and he must watch lest the adversary try to make him think that which is wrong to be right, and that which is right to be wrong. These, then, are snares which the adversary places for the feet of the new creature, and he uses the flesh in connection with its ensnarement; but the new creature in his will, his intention, must remain loyal to the Lord and to righteousness. If he yield his will to unrighteousness or ignore God's will, then he has ceased to be a new creature; the new things are passed away and all things become old again. This is a condition, we understand, from which he can never be recovered.—Heb. 6:4-6.

In this connection, the Apostle James, in speaking of saving a soul from death, is evidently referring to one who is going into that careless condition where the new mind has become, as it were, stupefied, where the old mind has gotten the ascendancy over it. If we see one of the Lord's people getting into such a condition, we should seek to restore him, "considering ourselves, lest we also be tempted" (Gal 6:1); and those who do recover such an one "save a soul from death." (Jas. 5:20) Thus brotherly kindness and assistance are specially commended of the Lord. A special blessing comes to all those who have an earnest desire thus to save an erring brother; a great reward is suggested for those who are successful in such an attempt.

HOW MAY WE KNOW WHEN WE ARE IN DANGER?

It might be asked how one could know when he was travel-

ing toward that point of danger, so that he might arrest his progress. To one not blinded by the adversary, the point of deflection from harmony with God's will would be as easily detected as would the border line between two States. The only ground upon which we were granted our present standing was our renouncement of sin and our consecration to the Lord—the giving up of our wills, complete surrender to him; and thus we came into the position of having the imputation of Christ's merit. If we should go back again and our will for righteousness become dead, this, of course, would imply that another will is there. We must have a will of some kind. If our will is no longer a righteous will, then it has gone across the border line and, according to the great Apostle, such never retrace their steps. "Christ dieth no more." There can be no more imputation of Christ's merit to such. They have had their blessing and if they, as the Apostle says, "return like a dog to his vomit," the step must prove fatal.—2 Pet. 2:21, 22.

True, the new mind at first is weak, undeveloped; and so the Scriptures represent the new creature as being merely "a babe in Christ," a babe in knowledge and a babe in the development of grace. But the Scriptures tell us that just as we care for a babe—specially handle it, specially feed it, specially deal with it, and do not treat it as we would treat an adult—so the Lord proposes that he will deal with all those who are babes in Christ. "He will not suffer them to be tempted above that they are able to bear, but with every temptation will provide a way of escape." (1 Cor. 10:13) The temptations will be permitted only in proportion to their feeble strength. He will supply for them the milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby, and gives them the assurance that all things shall work together for good to them.—Rom. 8:28.

The trials at the beginning, therefore, are commensurate with the weakness of the new creatures. It is true in some instances, however, that the new creature seems to have a great deal of courage and strength at the beginning—perhaps more than is ever exhibited afterward. This, of course, is not a satisfactory condition of things. We ought to go from grace to grace, from knowledge to knowledge; after a time, we ought to be teachers, as the Apostle says, and not need to be taught again the first principles of the doctrines of Christ. God deals with us now as new creatures under the direction of the Head. He supervises all the interests of each member of the body. All things, if properly accepted, are overruled of the Lord for good to us individually.

This is one of the great lessons of faith that the Lord's people need to learn, even after they have been in the way a good while. There are some Christian people who seem to have the impression, or at least give it to others, that they did this and that or saw so and so by their own wisdom. True, we all should use all the wisdom and strength we have; but the Christian who is relying upon himself is in a very dangerous position and quite likely the Lord will find it necessary to give him a lesson. For while it is his duty to rule his life so as to walk in the right paths, yet he needs continually to exercise faith in God and in the Lord's oversight and direction of his affairs, for "the steps of a righteous man are ordered of the Lord." If, in the Father's providence, some of the circumstances connected with our earthly affairs turn in this or that direction, our hearts should look to the Lord for the lesson to be drawn therefrom, and thus be able to glorify God thereby. The Christian should never view any experience as being lucky or unlucky, but should remember that all things connected with him, if he be living close to the Lord, are ordered and directed by the Lord.—Psa. 37:23.