

they, also, recognize Bible ordination, that they are not merely dependent upon each other. But we challenge them to prove that they ever had a divine ordination or that they ever think of it. They merely think of a sectarian ordination, or authorization, each from his own sect or party.

True, Catholics and Episcopalians are different and do recognize a Divine ordination. They claim that Jesus ordained his twelve apostles and that these have successors in the bishops, who are styled "apostolic bishops," and under the theory of "apostolic succession" have the same power as the original Twelve Apostles to ordain and to teach. Bible students believe that they err in this claim and that the doctrine of "apostolic succession" is unscriptural. The Bible recognizes only twelve apostles. More than that, the Bible denounces all apostolic bishops as being in error. Referring to them, Jesus said that they claimed to be apostles, and are not, but do lie. (Revelation 2:2.) In other words, contrary to the superstitions of Catholics and Episcopalians, their bishops have no authority whatever to ordain anybody.

What, then, is the proper ordination of a minister of Christ, and how can it be obtained, according to the Bible?

We answer that God's ordination, or authorization, of any man to preach is by the impartation of the holy Spirit to him. Whoever has received the holy Spirit has received the power and authority to teach and to preach in the name of God. Whoever has not received the holy Spirit has no divine authority or sanction to his preaching. In other words, he is unordained in the highest, truest sense of that word.

What is the secret of the opposition and slander that is being raised up against me and against all who, like me, are Bible students? It is malice, hatred, envy, strife, on the part of those who are still hugging the nonsense of the dark ages and neglecting true Bible study. They see that their influence is waning. But they have not yet awakened to the true situation. They think that I am responsible for their smaller congregations and small collections. But not so. The real difficulty with them is that the people are becoming more intelligent and can no longer be driven with the crack of a merely man-devised whip of fear. The colleges of the world have been teaching that the Bible is a foolish old book, until few preachers and few of the educated of the world believe it to be of divine inspiration. Losing faith in the Bible, in the preachers and in the creeds, the people are drifting toward atheism. That is the real difficulty.

While my work does not, indeed, help to build up any of the sects of Christendom, it is helping to establish Christian people in a true faith in God and in the Bible. It is giving them a firm foundation and an intelligent understanding such as they had prayed for and hoped for before, but never found. This is not because of great ability on my part, nor on the part of my associates, but because God's time has come for blessing Bible study in the light of present-day opportunities. It is as Jesus promised—the wise virgin class of Christian people, who "trim their lamps"—study the Bible—find it to shine out brightly and to point them to the new age of blessing under Messiah's kingdom.

VOL. XXXV

BROOKLYN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1914

No. 19

REJOICING IN TRIBULATION

"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."—Matthew 5:11, 12.

These words of our Lord are addressed to his disciples—not merely his apostles, who were chosen to be his special messengers, but all his followers throughout this age. A disciple is a pupil—one who is being taught by another. All who are Jesus' disciples are to take the message of our text to themselves. "Blessed are ye," signifies that persecution is a favor from God. Consider it as a favor from the Father when men shall revile you—not because of the reviling, but because they shall say these things of you falsely, for Christ's sake.

No one would choose naturally to be persecuted or to have evil spoken against him. The Scriptures say that a good name is more to be esteemed than great riches. But if it is for Christ's sake that we suffer, we may know that the Lord will recompense us. In the Lord's arrangement there is to be a time of "evening up" for all we suffer here. Thus we lay up treasure in heaven. All that we suffer now is storing up for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, if borne for him.

From this standpoint we should really desire persecution. We are not to strive for it, not to endeavor to bring it upon ourselves unnecessarily; but realizing that if we lack persecution we lack one of the evidences of being true disciples of the Lord, we rejoice when in the providence of God it is our portion. Some, it is true, might be reviled for something evil or unwise that they had done. There would be no blessing in such an experience. The blessing comes when the accusation against us is false and is for the truth's sake.

"All who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Hence we should investigate our lives to see whether we have this evidence that we are living godly. The Lord is the "true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." We are the lesser lights. In letting our lights shine faithfully, we shall bring upon ourselves persecution. Let us not imagine that escape from persecution in our own case is the result of superior wisdom or tact on our part. "All who will live godly shall suffer persecution," is the promise, the assurance of Scripture. We should not court it, but should desire this evidence of our faithfulness, and should wish to be one of the "blessed" ones, of whom the Master speaks in our text. Then let us ask ourselves, Do I have persecution for Christ's sake? We should make a prayerful examination of our hearts to see whether we are fully loyal to God, to see whether we are letting our light shine out properly. If we lack this proof of sonship, we should inquire, What is the reason?

PERSECUTION A SURE RESULT OF FAITHFULNESS

A sister once said to the Editor, "I have no persecution, no opposition. Everything seems to be going favorably with me." She seemed troubled. We asked the sister to study

her own heart to see whether or not she was as faithful as she knew how to be. Upon her reply we said, "Probably you take your persecutions with such grace that you are happy under them." The sister replied that she would be happy if she thought that was the case. Then we told her that the only other explanation we could think of was that the Lord was allowing her time to gain strength in order that she might bear what would come to her later. We told her to pray about it. A year or two after we again saw the sister. We recalled the circumstances, and asked her if she had yet had any persecution. She answered, "Oh, yes. I have had plenty of persecution, but I am happy and rejoicing in it!"

It is impossible to rejoice in persecution until we get the right focus on the subject. We cannot do this of ourselves, and need, therefore, to take the matter to the Lord and confer with him. After we have had "a little talk with Jesus," our faith takes hold on him. The Apostle Paul tells us that we are to be exceeding glad and joyful in persecution and affliction for Christ. The Apostle Peter also declares, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. On their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as . . . an evil-doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters; yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him glorify God on this behalf."—1 Peter 4:14, 15.

The Master was not surprised at the attitude of the chief priests and religious leaders of his day. He knew from the beginning that he would have their opposition and hostility, and he warned his disciples not to expect otherwise. As to the reason why there should be persecution against the Lord and those who faithfully follow in his footsteps, he himself tells us, saying, "The darkness hateth the light." Darkness stands for Satan, for sin, for everything contrary to righteousness. God is represented as the great light, "and in him is no darkness at all." Light is healing, beneficial, health-giving.

They who are of the darkness hate those who are of the light, because the light reproves the darkness, and the darkness does not like to be reproved. Wherever righteousness is, it is a rebuke to that which is sinful, dark. Our Lord stood for the light. He represented the truth, the heavenly Father. And those who were in darkness were in opposition to him in proportion to their darkness—some of these knowingly, others in more or less of ignorance. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of all them which believe not." Satan has been skilful in putting darkness for light and light for darkness.

The fact that many of the world are in opposition to God and righteousness is not because as a rule they are evil of

heart, but because Satan has succeeded in making the darkness seem desirable and the light undesirable. It was thus in the religious systems of Jesus' day, and we believe that it is the same in the religious systems of today. Saul of Tarsus was for a time one of those blinded by Satan. In persecuting the followers of Jesus he verily believed that he was doing God service. But when he was apprehended by the Lord and the light was revealed to him, he proved himself loyal to God.

And so we trust it is with some who today oppose the light and truth now being proclaimed. They are deluded; but if their hearts are fully loyal to the Lord, if they are true to their consecration vows, the truth will be revealed to them before "the door is shut"; for "ye, brethren, are not in darkness; ye are the children of light." "The wise shall understand." Soon the knowledge of the truth will come to the "foolish virgins," and they will wash their soiled robes in the blood of Christ—during the great tribulation shortly to come to the whole world. And soon, too, the light of the knowledge of God is to fill the whole earth. But so long as Satan is "the prince of this world," and there are those in the world who have his spirit, and those who are followers of the Lord and have his spirit, just so long must there be conflict.

The opposition of the darkness to the light may be manifested in different ways. In the days of our Lord and the apostles there were persecutions of Christians by Jews. Later, during the long centuries in which the Word of God was neglected and the truth was obscured by gross errors, there were persecutions of Protestants by Catholics and of Catholics by Protestants and of Jews by both—all because of failure to study the Word of God and to follow its teachings. But very few in these dark times had access to the Word.

Some of the opposition to our Lord was open, and some of it was hidden. Many of the apostles, like their Master, suffered death by violence; and many of the faithful down through the Gospel age have suffered violent deaths. At the present time, outward persecution is not sanctioned by law, nor is it tolerated to any great extent.

PRESENT METHODS OF PERSECUTION

Persecutors have all along used the weapon of reviling, slander, saying all manner of evil falsely against those who are God's true people. As the Bible declares, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Today slanderous charges are made and villainous, opprobrious expressions indulged in by opponents of the truth, and this is the chief weapon, because the defamers have not the power at present to use open, personal violence. Public sentiment and law would not permit it. But the persecution is of the same brand, the same spirit—merely governed by circumstances and conditions. Those who would say all manner of evil falsely, knowing the charges are false, are the very kind who would crucify or burn at the stake, had they the power. Not being permitted to use personal violence by the present laws and the general sentiment, these are forced to content themselves with bringing all sorts of false charges—seeking to assassinate the reputation and destroy the influence of those who are proclaiming the truth, the Word of God.

The right attitude of the persecuted ones is indicated in our text. Instead of feeling downcast and discouraged by these experiences, and thinking them strange, evidences that God is against us, we should conclude the very reverse. We should say to ourselves, "This is the same kind of experience that the Lord had, and that his people of the past have had." So, "Marvel not if the world [especially the religious world—the world that hated him] hate you. Ye know that it hated me before it hated you," forewarned our Master. So far from being discouraged, we are to rejoice—not that any could rejoice in the persecution for its own sake, for persecution is grievous; but we are to rejoice because "great is your reward in heaven." What we do not get here of prosperity, we shall get there—in the kingdom.

The Socialists say that they intend to have some of the good things now! They have not sufficient faith in the future blessings to be willing to wait. But the class addressed in our text are those who have faith in God and his promises, those who are associated with Christ, who understand that the experiences of this time are working out for them "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," and they are content to await God's time. These are rejoicing in their hearts, realizing that they are enduring for righteousness' sake, that they are on the side of God, the side of right, the side of truth, and realizing that these afflictions are only momentary, as it were; for the present life is but a mere span compared with the eternal life, the glorious immortality, so near at hand, in which we shall receive the blessings promised—joy forever with the Lord.

The Master gave all his followers fair warning that they were not to expect the world to appreciate their attitude. One

might well reason that if one gave up sin and adopted a righteous course, the world would esteem him; that all would see the worthiness of his character and would show him special deference. But we must not expect this under the present reign of Sin. It would be a very broad way into the kingdom, and a great many then might take this course for the favor of man, for the prosperity which it would bring them. The Lord could never demonstrate our fitness for the kingdom honors under such conditions.

If our great Master was called Beelzebub, we cannot expect that the members of his household will be treated any better. If he who was perfect was held up to scorn as the prince of devils, we may expect similar treatment to be meted out to his followers by those whom the adversary has blinded; for we are less able to uphold the standard of righteousness than was he. When his enemies attempted to make his character appear vile in the sight of others, he did not retaliate. Jesus did on proper occasions point out the wrong-doing, the wrong character, of those who were the religious leaders and teachers; but he did not do this in a retaliatory sense. On various occasions he accused them of being untrue, unholy, hypocritical; but he said nothing with a view to injuring them, but with the desire to show them their improper condition of heart, that they might profit by his instruction. He endeavored to help others to see the real condition of these blind leaders of the blind, in order to prevent them from falling into the ditch toward which their leaders were hastening.

THE MASTER'S CRUCIAL TEST

When the scribes, the Pharisees and the Doctors of the Law tried to trump up charges against the Master and to put evil constructions upon what he said, he was patient under all these trying conditions. He submitted to the treatment. It might be asked, Why did God permit his holy Son to suffer such revilings? Why did he not smite down those who did so wickedly? The answer is that the Father wished to demonstrate the kind of character that was pleasing to him, and he wished to test the loyalty of Jesus himself. Would he be submissive and obedient or would he resent these affronts? Would he say, "I will have none of this! I did not come into the world to bear such indignities"? His painful experiences were thus tests of his loyalty to the Father.

Jesus knew that it was the Father's will that he should submit himself, even unto death, and he had agreed to do this. Now the crucial test was: Would he continue loyal to the Father and carry out his purposes? If so, he would be worthy to be the Messiah, worthy to be the divine Son of God throughout eternity. Our Lord's experiences had all been foretold in prophecy. In order to fulfil these prophecies it must be that he receive revilings, and he must accept them properly. The Apostle Peter shows that in this he was a worthy example to all of his followers. As he who was holy, harmless, undefiled, did not seek to have the Father bring upon the revilers some punishment for their misdoings, so this is an example for us; so we should walk in his steps.

SPIRIT OF PERSECUTION STILL HERE

We realize that in our case there is none righteous, not one who is perfect. So we see that our enemies might have some cause to revile us. They might see some of our imperfections and have something that they could pick at and exaggerate. The Apostle Peter says, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which shall try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." As they said all manner of evil against our Lord falsely, we may be sure that they will say all manner of evil falsely against us. And as he bore it patiently, so are we to take patiently everything that comes to us, and to recognize that nothing can possibly happen to us except what the Father will foreknow and permit for our good and for his glory. Our Master left us a portion of his cup that the Father poured for him. After the cup has all been drained, then will come the glory and the honor—but not now.

We might naturally expect under the changed conditions of the present day, that those who are loyal to God and his truth would not be maltreated and persecuted as in Jesus' day. But we believe there is another way of viewing the matter. We believe that Jesus, if he were here in the flesh today, would be persecuted and maligned by the worldly-minded, especially in the nominal church systems. Now, instead of crucifying him literally, or roasting him at the stake, they would "roast" him before the public—a more refined form of persecution—for the spirit of persecution is still here.

In proportion as the followers of Jesus are faithful to the teachings of the Master, in that same proportion they will be out of harmony with everything opposed to the spirit of Christ, and in that same proportion they will be misrepresented and persecuted. In Jesus' day there were plenty of people who

did reverence to the Doctors of the Law, who made broad their phylacteries and were very exact as to the letter of the law, the paying of tithes, etc. Jesus did not seek honor and high position. But he appealed to the people to turn from sin, to walk in his steps, to stand for the truth as against all unrighteousness and untruth. This appeal touched no responsive chord in the hearts of the worldly-minded.

For this reason, we say that the world has not changed, that the world is still in opposition to the Word and its spirit—particularly the religious world. It is still true, however, as in the days of our Lord in the flesh, that the common people are inclined to hear the Gospel gladly, if not blinded by the religious leaders. But today, as in Jesus' time, many are influenced by the false representations of those to whom they have been accustomed to look as their spiritual shepherds. If then the world should come to be in sympathy with us as a people, and should speak well of us, and we should become popular, we should come under the condemnation expressed in the Master's words, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you; for so did their fathers unto the false prophets."

THINK IT NOT STRANGE

If, on the contrary, we find that in spite of our best endeavors we are beset by opposition, and are viewed with suspicion, if unworthy constructions are placed upon our unselfish efforts to do good and to carry to others the glorious light which has so blessed our own hearts, let us not be surprised or feel aggrieved; for undoubtedly it is for the same reason that Jesus was opposed.

The spirit of light is the spirit of Christ. The spirit of darkness is of the world. All who have sympathy for that which is evil, or have been so blinded that light appears as darkness, will oppose the light. There has been so much of selfishness in the world, and the people have been so often taken advantage of and duped, that we cannot wonder that they are slow to believe that there are any who can be actuated solely by the motive of blessing their fellows.

It will be to the interest of some to promote priestcraft, and they will, therefore, seek to break down whatever is inimical to their interests. They say, "You are opposing us." We reply that we are only holding up the light. But they feel that the light that is reaching the people is undermining their influence. We believe that this is the secret of much of the strong opposition to the truth that is prevailing in some quarters. There is a large number, we believe, who in many respects are good men, but who are fighting the light. We may suppose that they do not realize what they are doing—that unwittingly they are holding on to the ignorance of error, in bondage to sin and Satan. For this reason they are in antagonism to those who are lifting the veil from before the Lord's people and showing them the character of God, that he is love. Hence the conflict which is going on.

Another phase of opposition is in respect to financial matters. When we claim that what is given to the Lord should not be obtained by cajoling the people, should not be pulled out of them, worked out of them, extorted from them, but that whatever is given should be a free will, voluntary offering, we are running counter to the custom of centuries. As one Baptist minister said to two of our brethren, "Think of Pastor Russell's advertising 'Seats free and no collections!' Where would we be if we did not have collections, or if the people got the thought that it is not the proper thing to pass the collection baskets?"

THE REBUKE OF HIS PEOPLE SOON TO VANISH

As our Master was hated without a cause, so let this be our experience, as far as possible. Let us see to it that the hatred, the malice, the envy and spirit of murder which is heaped upon us is entirely undeserved. Let it be our earnest endeavor that our lives, as fully as we are able, shall reflect the light of the truth, shall be as noble and upright as possible in all things; that our words and actions shall glorify the Lord whom we serve, and be eloquent of our love for all mankind, especially for the household of faith, whether enlightened by present truth as yet or not.

In a very little while, we believe, we shall be glorified with our Lord, if faithful. Then a new dispensation will be inaugurated; and those who hate us now, chiefly because blinded and misled by the adversary, will bow their hearts before us as the Anointed of the Lord, and we shall have the blessed privilege of uplifting them, of enlightening and forgiving them, of helping them to attain the perfect image and likeness of our God.

HOW FAR ARE OUR EXPERIENCES SUPERVISED?

The question might arise with some, To what extent does God supervise the experiences of his children? The Master said, "The cup which my father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?" Then how would it be with our cup? Is

God not also our Father? Are not we members of Christ? Who, then, but the Father pours our cup? But we know that God is not a participator in any evil thing; how, then, has he anything to do with the evils that come to his people?

We answer, There are all manner of evil forces and influences surrounding us. These evil influences are of Satan and the fallen angels. "Our adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour," and the fallen angels also go about seeking how they may assault the children of the Lord. But they can have no power whatever against us except as the Father shall permit it. He will permit no evil influence to touch us to our injury as new creatures, if we keep close to him. And he will prevent harm or injury to our persons, unless he sees it will outwork good to us, if we are rightly exercised by it.

ALL THINGS WORKING FOR OUR GOOD

We have also the opposition of the world. But Satan, the prince of this world, succeeds in blinding the minds of men, putting error for truth, and darkness for light, in order to make the way of righteousness and obedience to God appear foolish and undesirable and extreme. Those who have more or less of the spirit of the world bring against the Lord's children in a perfectly natural way, aside from the direct influence of the evil one and his cohorts, a certain amount of opposition. For instance, our Lord, as the time of his death drew near, was speaking to the apostles about the great climax of his experiences—that he would go up to Jerusalem, that men would crucify him, etc. Then Peter said, Lord, Lord, do not allow your mind to run in this channel! You have come to earth to be the great King! Do not let the thought get into your mind that you are to be crucified! And the Lord turned to Peter and said, "Get thee behind me, adversary!" He was the Lord's adversary for the time.

So the world often become adversaries of the children of God in their zeal for what they think the more honorable and advantageous course for us. They urge, Do not take such an extreme view of things, and you will get along better. This is opposition to our consecration vow; and when we resist their well-meant efforts, they seek to thwart us and to bring us back to their views and ideas. The ideal of the world for us as Christians would be, Do good, and work for social uplift, for civic reform; build hospitals, establish orphanages, etc.; but do not spend so much time studying that old Bible, or they will call you an extremist or a heretic. So the world tries sympathetically to influence us. And our Father permits these influences to be brought to bear upon us for our proving. We may be sure that the Lord so supervises our experiences that nothing can come to us in any way whatsoever but what will work for our spiritual good so long as we keep ourselves in his love—so long as we wholly abide in him. And death itself is powerless to touch us until God's time for us shall have come.

Our flesh is out constant, ever-present adversary. It tries to say, No, no! Do not carry this thing so far! Our flesh is inclined to be in harmony with the world. But our new creature replies, Jesus walked the way of sacrifice and suffering—and St. Paul, St. Peter and St. John. Then the flesh suggests that they were special persons. But we know that the Bible teaches us that the same course is to be followed by all of the Lord's faithful people, and that all these will receive persecution.—2 Timothy 3:12.

All will not be crucified, nor will all be thrust in a caldron of boiling oil or be sawn asunder or beheaded. We shall probably not have any of these experiences; but we must suffer. So we bid our flesh be silent, and we rejoice in the experiences that we do have; for "if we suffer [with him], we shall reign with him." (2 Timothy 2:12.) Of course we rejoice! And the world says that we are going insane!

THE PRECIOUS PROMISES OUR STRENGTH

We are to remember, dear brethren—and this is to be a parting thought with us—that nothing can by any means harm us, aside from our Father's will. We are promised that not one hair of our heads shall be hurt—figuratively. And we have the guarantee from the Lord that "all things shall work together for good to those that love God," who put their trust in him. Whatever would not be a blessing to us will not be permitted. Our trials and tribulations, rightly received, are to work out for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—2 Cor. 4:17, 18.

As we look back, we can see that all who have walked in the narrow way have received persecution. Whoever has been in accord with God has been out of accord with the course of this world. There were the Baptists, and then the Methodists, who in the early days had persecution because they had more light than others. The Presbyterians also for a time, because they had greater light than others, received persecution.

THE NIGHT ALMOST OVER

And we must expect the same today. Persecution will come to those who have the courage of their convictions. The Lord tells us that the anointing that we have received of him is for the very purpose that we may show forth his praises. (1 Peter 2:9) We must examine ourselves to see if to any extent we have kept our light under a bushel. In the 11th chapter of Hebrews, St. Paul recounts the sufferings of the prophets and worthies of old. Some of them were stoned to death, some sawn asunder; they were killed and persecuted in a variety of ways. These godly men endured much for righteousness' sake. "And all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

But the night is almost over. Soon the Lord will rise up. He will stretch forth his hands—his power—and his children

shall be delivered. Soon will come the glorious reign of Messiah. Then all who will live righteously shall have peace. Altogether, dear friends, our text is very precious—one that should encourage our hearts and help to guide us on our way, and bring us comfort and rejoicing in these closing days of our pilgrimage.

"Our God is love; he loves to hear our voices;
In Christ we share the riches of his grace;
He loves to fold his arms of comfort round us,
And let us nestle in the children's place.

"He loves to answer prayer, though not it may be
In just the way that we should think the best;
But in his own prospective, perfect judgment
He gives the blessings and withholds the rest."

JEHOVAH'S ABIDING PRESENCE WITH HIS PEOPLE

"My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."—Exodus 33:14.

The children of Israel had come out of Egypt; they had crossed the Red Sea, and had come to Mount Sinai. Moses had gone up into the Mount, had received the tables of the Law, and had come down and found the nation in idolatry, worshipping the golden calf which they had made. While Moses was still in the Mount, the Lord had told him that Israel had already turned aside from the true God to idols, and was offering sacrifice to a molten calf as the god who had brought them forth out of Egypt; and he instructed Moses to go down to the people. The wrath of God was hot against them, and he proposed to Moses that he consume them and make of him a great nation. But Moses besought the Lord for Israel, and the Lord was entreated of him and spared the nation from annihilation, and promised him that he should still be their leader.

Then Moses went down from the Mount. He realized that Israel had grievously sinned, and his anger was kindled against them. He cast down the tables of the law, which were in his hands, and broke them, when he saw and heard the dancing and feasting and shouting around the idol which they had set up for themselves. Here was a nation delivered by God from Egyptian bondage. The Red Sea had opened for them to pass over, by the power of Jehovah. They had also received various blessings along their way, notable proofs of divine guidance. Yet in spite of all this, here was rebellion and idolatry! What could he expect of a people who had so little appreciation of God, that they were quickly turned aside? Even Moses' own brother, Aaron, led astray by the insistence of the people, felt it necessary to co-operate with them in the making of the golden calf.

Then Moses took the calf which they had made, and burned it in fire, ground it to powder, scattered it upon the water and compelled the children of Israel to drink of it. He reproved Aaron, and then stood in the gate of the camp and said to all the people, "Who is on Jehovah's side? Let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses; and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men."—Exodus 32:26-28.

MOSES' CRY AND ITS ANSWER

The day following, Moses explained to the people how great was the sin of which they had been guilty and told them that he would go to the Lord in prayer, if peradventure he might make atonement for their sin. Then he went to the Lord in earnest supplication, pleading that if God would not forgive his people, he would also blot out his name from his book. But God answered, "Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book." He promised to send his angel before Moses, but assured him that he was not yet through dealing with Israel for their iniquity. He instructed Moses to tell them of their stiffneckedness and to command them in his name to put off their ornaments, that he might know what course he would pursue with them.

The people obeyed God. They laid aside their ornaments, and humbled themselves and worshipped the Lord. Moses, heavy of heart, felt that unless God would in some special way give him the necessary wisdom and grace for the great task of leading so perverse a people into the inheritance which the Lord had promised them if they would serve him, he would be utterly insufficient for the undertaking. So he again appealed to God in earnest prayer. He told him of his trepidation and his earnest desire for his sustaining help and his

presence with him in all the way, pleading, This is too great a work for me!

Then the Lord assured Moses that he would go with him, that he should have his presence throughout the entire journey to the Promised Land; for he had found grace in his sight. He said, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." Moses then besought the Lord, "Show me thy glory." It was here that God put Moses into the cleft of a rock and covered him with his hand while he passed by and let Moses see his glory from behind, saying, "No man can see my face and live."

When God speaks of his presence with his servants we are not to think of his being with them in his bodily presence, but by his Spirit and through his angelic messengers, sustaining, blessing and guiding them. He protects them from whatever will harm them. He watches over their every interest and tenderly cares for them.

IDEA OF GOD'S OMNIPRESENCE AN ERROR

It is a common, but erroneous, thought that God is actually present in person everywhere. We do not understand the Scriptures to so teach. This generally prevailing error that God is everywhere present in person, and at the same time, has led many to think of him as being not a person at all, but merely an influence. We understand the Bible presentation of the matter to be that God has a personal, bodily presence, aside from the power and influence which he exerts; and that he has a central seat of government, where he resides.

"Heaven is my throne, the earth is my footstool," says Jehovah. The one who has his seat in heaven and whose footstool is the earth is a great God! But this is, of course, a forceful figure of speech, showing his all-embracing power and control. God does not actually sit in a certain part of his universe and have his literal feet in another part. The language of Scripture accommodates itself to the mind of man, and speaks of God as if he possessed the same bodily members as humanity. But actually we know not what a spirit body is like. "It doth not yet appear," even to the saints of the Lord who are still in the flesh.

We understand that the bodily presence of Jehovah is in heaven. Everything in the Bible teaches us that he is very great—infinite in power. We read that "the Lord looketh down from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth." (Psalm 33:13, 14) He has beheld men in their distress, and has provided for their deliverance "in due times." But we should clearly distinguish between this thought of God's looking down from heaven and the thought that he is personally present on earth. We can see a mile off, or five miles off, by the power of our sight. We can be a hundred or more feet away and be present by the power of our voice; or aided by the modern invention of the telephone, we can be present by our voice several hundred miles away. In that sense of the word the Lord is present everywhere throughout his mighty universe, and his power can be exerted everywhere. He has means by which he can be cognizant of all earthly affairs and of matters pertaining to all his great domain.

We have these powers only to a very limited extent. The telegraph, the telephone, the telescope, etc., are all means by which our presence, power and influence are extended to a certain degree; but our powers are limited to this small planet, except as we further extend them by means of prayer, and thus set in motion influences whose extent we are not now able to fathom. But this latter privilege is only for a few at present. Not many thus have access to the power which controls the universe. And these who have the privilege of com-

ing to the mighty King of heaven may come only in his appointed way, subject to the conditions which he has made.

We can place no limitations upon the power of Jehovah. The inventions of this time of the end, which have increased our powers of communication, and so have united all parts of the globe, give us but a very faint conception of the infinite powers of the Almighty God. These inventions, we believe, will continue to increase and multiply through the incoming age, thus adding more and more to the powers and blessings of mankind. These will give mankind a greater and greater appreciation of the majesty, glory and might of their Creator as they come to know him as he is and to worship him in spirit and in truth. Yet no human mind, even in perfection, will be able to comprehend the mighty Maker of the universe.

GOD'S GUIDANCE THROUGH THE WILDERNESS

So God promised Moses that his presence, his power and sustaining grace should go with him all the way. He wished him to understand that he was not to perform his great work alone, without all-sufficient backing. "I will be with you," was the promise. The Lord's presence was indeed with the children of Israel in a very marked manner—continually with them from the time they crossed the Red Sea, guiding by blessings or by chastisements, as they should need. He was with them in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, and by his presence in the Shekinah glory which covered the Mercy-seat in the Most Holy of the Tabernacle. After the Tabernacle was set up by God's instruction, these manifestations of his presence, his power and his watchful care never failed. The pillar of cloud and of fire guided their journeyings; and when these rested, it was an indication from God that they were to abide where they were until the pillar of cloud or fire again moved from its place.

Moses had said to the Lord, "If thy presence go not with us, send us not up hence"—this is too great a task for any man to accomplish alone. But if thy presence will continue with us, if I can be shown thy will and be continually directed by thee, then I will be able to lead this people through the wilderness journey to the land of Canaan. Frequently the Lord spoke to Moses through the Tabernacle. Thus we see that the promise of his presence with him was fulfilled. The Lord gave him rest. He lived to be one hundred and twenty years old, yet was not his strength impaired nor his eye dim. We remember that there was a time when Moses realized that the work of judging the people was too great for him. He took the matter to the Lord, and seventy judges were then chosen to share his burden. The matters that were too difficult for them they brought to Moses. He went to God with all his difficulties and burdens and he had continual blessing.

THE LESSON TO SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

The experiences of natural Israel have very important lessons for Israel according to the Spirit. A people originally a part of the world, we have been invited to come out from the world and to journey to a new Country, to come into a heavenly inheritance. We are marching toward the glorious kingdom promised us if we are faithful. There are trials and difficulties along the way. But our God has promised us, as he promised Moses his servant, that his presence shall go with us. Sometimes he seems to withdraw from us and to leave us to ourselves; but he does not really do so. He tests our loyalty and our faith in him by withholding the sense of his presence at times.

Shall we, then, like Israel of old, conclude that God is no more with us, and turn again to the gods we formerly worshiped—gods of wealth or of pleasure, gods worshiped by the nations around us? Shall we give ourselves up to revelry, worldly merry-making and sin? Shall we forget all the way by which our God has led us, all the great deliverances which the past of our lives have recorded? Shall anything—either "tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come or any other thing in creation be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord?" Surely not!

The closer we live to the Lord, and the greater our faith, the more we shall realize the divine direction, and the more we shall make use of the means he has provided for our strengthening and upholding. We may call upon him in time of trouble; we may go to him in prayer; and he never fails those who put their trust in him and earnestly seek to walk in his appointed way. This being true, we may go forth upon our journey, in perfect trust and confidence. Having consecrated our all to the Lord, we are to seek for his guidance, for his presence is with us, in all the affairs of our life.

Few have such mighty burdens to carry as Moses had. But all of God's children have burdens to bear, and important responsibilities are resting upon each of us who have taken

upon us the vows of our God. Each member of the body of Christ, the true Israel of God, is privileged to have the continual guidance of the Lord in every experience of our wilderness journey. Heavenly manna is furnished for our daily sustenance. The water of life flows out to us for our daily refreshing, from the smitten Rock of Ages. Our Father's chastening rod restrains us when we are in danger, or when we wander into any forbidden path. How lovingly he brings us back into the right way, and heals our wounds, and graciously forgives our stumblings and weaknesses! Surely we may have implicit confidence in our heavenly Guide. Thus we may rest in him and be kept in perfect peace. Our hearts can truly exclaim with the poet:

"He has guided my steps where I could not see,
By ways that I had not known;
The crooked was straight and the rough made plain
As I followed the Lord alone.
I praise his name for the pleasant palms
And the water-springs by the way;
For the glowing pillar of fire by night,
And the sheltering cloud by day.

"There is light for me on the trackless wild
As the wonders of old I trace,
When the God of the whole earth went before
To search me a resting place!
Hath he changed for me? Nay, he changeth not;
He will bring me by some new way,
Through fire and flood and each crafty foe,
As safely as yesterday."

He who so faithfully cared for Israel after the flesh, who were a perverse and fickle people, will surely care more abundantly for his true spiritual Israel, who love him supremely and are daily seeking more fully to know his will that they may do it.

The Apostle Paul, in warning spiritual Israel not to fall after the same example of unbelief of natural Israel, and thus lose their hold on the Lord, says, "We who have believed do enter into rest." (Hebrews 4:3) It was unbelief that led to the disobedience and perversity of Israel after the flesh, and that led to their final rejection by the Lord as his favored people, to whom should apply the most precious promises. They have lost forever as a nation the special place of favor which was theirs by inheritance. What a lesson this should be to spiritual Israel! And yet we see that today the great mass of spiritual Israel are falling "after the same example of unbelief." And they, too, will lose the chief place of favor, which was offered them when it was taken from unbelieving natural Israel. Only a faithful "remnant" of both natural and spiritual Israel will gain the great inheritance held out to them by the Lord.

THE GLORIOUS INHERITANCE OF SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

Those who prove faithful during the present dispensation shall inherit the most precious things which God has to offer, the secret things which were for ages kept hidden, but are now revealed to the true saints of God. The faithful of past ages shall inherit the earth as rulers and princes over mankind, during the glorious reign of Messiah. Gathered to these will be natural Israel then living. They shall have a rich heritage. What remains for them in the ages of glory to follow, we may not know with certainty, but it will be a blessed portion, we may be sure.

The faithful of the present age have been raised to "sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus"—"the Lion of the tribe of Judah." These faithful ones are the twelve tribes of Israel who are to reign with him. These—only a little flock, in all 144,000—are of the faithful remnant of natural Israel, who were gathered at the beginning of this Gospel age, and the faithful remnant from the Gentile church of this age. (Revelation 7:4-8; 14:1-5) These have "the peace of God which passeth all understanding," and which none others can know. "My peace I give unto you," whispers the Master to these. We have a rest of faith now; and we are assured that we who have entered into this rest shall in due time, if we faint not, enter into the complete "rest that remaineth for the people of God." This rest we shall enter into when we experience our glorious "change" in the first resurrection, when we are transformed in body and made like our Lord, and shall see and know as we are now seen and known to God. We shall then be blessed with the exceeding glory which he has promised—immortality, his own nature—and a seat with our Savior in his throne.

The God of Israel is indeed ever present with his true people. He never forgets us, but is constantly looking out for our interests, guarding us in every time of danger, providing for our every need, both temporal and spiritual, whatever is

best for the interest of the new creature. He reads every thought of our hearts; he marks every impulse of devotion and love to him; he shapes all the influences surrounding our lives for our disciplining and refining, and hearkens to our every cry for aid and comfort and sympathy and fellowship with him. He is never for even a moment forgetful or off guard. "He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps." (Psalm 121) If we call him in the busy hours of the day, or in the silent watches of the night, he is near to uphold and sustain

and protect, whether we can realize his presence at all times or not.

How blessed the assurance of such constant, abiding care and faithfulness! No real child of God is devoid of these evidences of his precious relationship to the Father—the God of Israel. And the saints who have been called with the heavenly calling, and are faithfully responding, are his true Israel in the highest sense, heirs of all his choicest promises. How goodly a heritage is ours!

THE ANOINTING OF THE CHURCH

"The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you."—1 John 2:27.

Under the divine arrangement with the nation of Israel their high priests, who represented the entire priesthood, were inducted into office by an anointing with a peculiar kind of rich perfume called the holy anointing oil. This oil was made according to a special prescription, and the people were not permitted to use it, upon penalty of death. After Israel had become a kingdom, the kings were also anointed with this holy anointing oil.

These two offices of priest and king were afterwards shown to be typical of a united service which would find its antitype in One who was to be a Priest upon his throne—a royal priest, a priestly king. The Scriptures give us a type of this united office in the person of Melchizedek, of whom it is written that he was king of Salem and priest of the Most High God. (Genesis 14:18-20; Hebrews 7:1-17) By thus comparing Scripture with Scripture we learn that Messiah, who is to accomplish the great work of blessing the world, is to be the one who will combine the offices of both king and priest.

Examining the type closely, we find that the holy anointing oil was poured upon the head of the high priest only at the time of his induction into office. Poured liberally upon his head, the oil ran down to the very skirts of his priestly robes of office. As we shall see later, this circumstance was also typical.

Looking forward from the type to the antitype, we perceive the Scriptures to teach that there is to be established in the earth a great Messianic kingdom, which will bind Satan, restrain all evil influences and give the whole world of mankind a full opportunity of reconciliation with God. We also understand that there will be done a great priestly work in connection with this kingdom. This also will be a part of Messiah's great work, which is thus shown to be twofold; as King he will rule mankind with a rod of iron for their blessing, and as Priest he will instruct, uplift, heal their diseases and awaken the dead.

"CHRIST IN YOU THE HOPE OF GLORY"

The nation of Israel well understood that their Messiah was to be the promised seed of Abraham, who was to bless all the families of the earth; but not until the time of our Lord's first advent was it due to be understood that this seed was to consist of more than one individual. The Apostle Paul calls our attention to this fact and declares that this was the mystery hidden from previous dispensations—that the Messiah was to be, not an individual, but a company under one Headship. (Ephesians 3:2-7; Colossians 1:25-27) Furthermore, this Messiah is not only to be multitudinous, but is to be gathered from amongst many nations.

Only a few can understand this mystery; many do not comprehend it yet; in fact, it is to be understood only by a special class, for whom it is designed. The Scriptures show us that the Gospel age is set aside for the selection of this great antitypical King, greater than Solomon; this great antitypical royal Priest, represented by Melchizedek. The call of this age is for those who shall become members of this company, the antitypical Priest and King.

CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

All who would become members of this kingdom class must look to our Lord Jesus as the one through whom the favor of God is to come to them. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved." Since the death and resurrection of Christ a new way to life has been opened up. Christ will be the Head of the church which is his body; and the entire church will complete the great antitypical Prophet, Priest and King—the long expected seed of Abraham.—Galatians 3:8, 16, 29.

Therefore let all who have offered themselves to God in consecration take up the cross and follow the Master; let them live as nearly as possible the life that he lived, walking in his steps. While we cannot be perfect according to the flesh, and while God cannot approve anything imperfect, yet our perfection is to be that of intention, of will; and thus through the Redeemer shall we approve ourselves unto him.

Reverting to the typical picture of the anointing of the Jewish high priest at the time of his induction into office and comparing it with the antitype, we perceive that the great antitypical Priest was anointed at Jordan. There our Lord Jesus, the Head of the Christ company, received the holy Spirit without measure. At Pentecost the antitypical anointing oil began to flow down to the church. As in the type the oil poured upon the head of the high priest flowed down to the very skirts of his garments, so the holy Spirit has come down from the Head of the church even to the last members of the anointed body of Christ.—Psalm 133:1-3.

THE ENTIRE CHRIST COMPANY ANOINTED

We receive this anointing from the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ. All things are of the Father and all things are by the Son. (1 Corinthians 8:6) The Father bestowed the holy Spirit upon the Son, and authorized him to bestow it upon his body. This granting of the holy Spirit was designed to be an anointing for the whole body; for the Father recognized the body when he recognized the Head. When Christ made imputation of his merit to cover the blemishes of the church, he made us acceptable to the Father; and this acceptance was outwardly manifested by the tongues of fire, etc., which came upon the apostles at Pentecost. This outward manifestation was not the most important thing, however; for the apostles might have received the holy Spirit without any special manifestation of divine power.

The tongues of fire which descended at Pentecost, like the dove which lighted upon our Lord at his baptism, did not continue to be seen. Both the dove and the flame of light were merely outward representations for the purpose of convincing the beholders that the promised blessing and power had come.

When Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, was received into the anointed company, there was another manifestation of the fact that the holy Spirit had been given to the followers of Jesus. So there might be many manifestations of any fact. Even now God might give a manifestation to show that he had bestowed the holy Spirit; but by so doing he would merely be indicating the fact—the holy Spirit was already there. The anointing which the church received at Pentecost was the divine sanction, the divine recognition, of those consecrated to follow in the footsteps of our Lord. God thus gave outward demonstration of the fact that there was to be a church.

Since Pentecost the same Gospel call has gone forth throughout all the world—to as many as the Lord our God doth call. (Acts 2:39) Those who accept the terms and conditions of that call come into the anointed company. When we come into Christ, we come into this anointing. We do not get into the body of Jesus, but we come into this symbolical body of the Anointed—The Christ. We enter into this condition in which we are "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" Jesus our Lord. Throughout this Gospel age this anointing has continued in the church. "The anointing which ye have received abideth in you"; it continues in you. Those who never come into this anointing will never be of the church.

ANOINTING AND BEGETTING

As to how we may know that we have been begotten is another phase of the matter. At Pentecost when the church began, there were outward signs by which this anointing was demonstrated—gifts of the Spirit, gifts of tongues, etc. These were merely outward gifts, the Apostle tells us, and might mean no more than tinkling cymbals or sounding brass. (1 Corinthians 13:1-3) It might be that those having the gifts had merely come into relationship with God in an outward, formal way, and had made no real progress in spiritual things.

God's arrangement seems to be that after we have come into this anointed company and thus may from the very beginning speak and think of ourselves as the anointed class, there will be and by come a manifestation that we have really entered into this class. This evidence will not be by our speaking with tongues, etc., but by the appearance of the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit—meekness, patience, gentleness, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. The manifestation of these fruits

would seem to mean that we were becoming more and more actuated by the Spirit of Christ.

But even here we must discriminate between the natural disposition and that acquired by growth in grace. For instance, there are those who have a great deal of patience—too much, in fact; they are indolent. Their patience, therefore, is not a fruit of the Spirit. In order to distinguish between natural traits and acquired graces we are to compare the person's natural disposition with his growth in grace and in the fruits of the Spirit.

The anointing of the Spirit is not altogether the same as the begetting of the Spirit. The anointing relates merely to the recognition as a member of a class called to a special work in the Messianic kingdom. When we become related to God through Christ we become members of the anointed company. But while the anointing is represented of the whole church collectively, the begetting of the holy Spirit is an individual matter. In various ways the Scriptures explain to us that we are begotten of the holy Spirit by and through the Word of truth.

SANCTIFIED THROUGH THE WORD OF TRUTH

In other words, no one can receive the holy Spirit except he has received the truth. As an illustration, Cornelius was a good man, who prayed much and gave alms liberally; all this, however, did not give him the holy Spirit. But when the appropriate time came—the end of the seventy weeks of favor to the Jews—Cornelius was directed to one who would tell him what he ought to do. He was instructed by a holy angel to send for St. Peter to come to his house and to tell him words. (Acts 10:22) Words were necessary.

In order to become members of the church of Christ, there must be intelligent action on our part—it is not something of a *hocus-poeus*. We may know, therefore, that no heathen, however noble by nature, could possibly be of the church class; and the same is true of people who are civilized. Who-

ever is to be of the anointed company must have a knowledge of the privilege of coming into relationship with God through Christ. If any one has not this information, he cannot possibly be of the church class.

It is the Word of God, the Gospel message, that will bring people into relationship with God. So whoever will receive the holy Spirit must first receive the knowledge of the truth; and then this truth will operate upon him. First he must take his stand for righteousness; next he must receive Christ as his Redeemer. Then, after having accepted Christ as his Savior, he must go forward and make a consecration of himself to walk in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus. If he merely understood that this is the will of God, we believe that he would be received of the Lord—begotten of the holy Spirit. Then it would be God's order that he receive more instruction, because he had taken the proper steps thus far.

THE PURPOSE OF THE ANOINTING

How much of this is done automatically we may not surely know. As the skilful human being operates largely along automatic lines, so the great Creator would doubtless have automatic lines along which to work; and one step would lead on to one result, and another step to another result, etc. Our supposition is that God has some great principle operating automatically by which, under Christ, all whom he would accept would receive certain blessings individually. As soon as the individual would take the required steps, he would realize the divine blessing and guidance in his affairs.

All of the anointed have the mind of the great Head of the church. So we are to seek to abide in Christ individually as well as collectively; for as we have come into the anointed class, so it is possible for us to go out of that class. To abide in Christ, we must, as new creatures, grow in grace, in knowledge and in love; for as new creatures we shall, if faithful to the end of our course, be perfected in the first resurrection, and sit in the throne with our Lord and King.—Revelation 3:21.

WHY GETHSEMANE'S AGONY?

OCTOBER 18.—Mark 14:32-42.

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation."—Matthew 26:41.

Following the institution of the Supper which memorializes his death, Jesus and his disciples sang a hymn, and then went out of the city to the Mount of Olives opposite—a distance of perhaps a mile. Apparently several important lessons were given to the disciples en route to Gethsemane. These St. John's Gospel records in Chapters 15-17.

The word Gethsemane signifies an oil press—a name that is full of significance. When we remember that the Jews used the oil of the olives both for food and for light, and that Jesus is the nourisher as well as the enlightener of the world, we see a special fitness in his having his trying experiences, which almost crushed his soul, in a garden used for the crushing of olives and the extraction of their oil.

Gethsemane was not a flower garden, but an olive orchard or garden. The supposed site is still carefully preserved, and guarded by Franciscan monks. In the Garden are some very ancient olive trees and one extremely old oak. The Garden is supposed to have belonged to some of Jesus' friends; and there is claimed to be some evidence that John Mark, the writer of the Gospel of St. Mark, was the lad who was awakened from his slumbers by the commotion incident to Jesus' arrest and who came forth in his nightgown.—Mark 14:51, 52.

A NOTE OF WARNING

En route for Gethsemane, Jesus sought to impress upon his disciples the fact that they were entering a great crisis. He quoted to them the prophecy, "I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered." (Zechariah 13:7) He said to them plainly that as a result they would all be offended—discouraged, stumbled, amazed. The thing that they were not expecting would occur.

St. Peter, full of confidence in his own devotion to the Lord, denied this, declaring that it would not be true in his case—that even though it should be true of all the others, he was ready to die with the Master, rather than to deny him. Jesus still insisted that St. Peter was in great danger. He was trusting too much to his flesh, and not looking to God and prayerfully watching against temptation. Indeed, all the disciples joined in the same remonstrance against the accusation that Jesus had made. They declared themselves loyal and ready for death. How little they knew what severe trials would come upon them!

Surely there is a lesson here for all the followers of Jesus—today as well as then. It is right that we should feel ourselves thoroughly determined to be loyal to the Lord's cause to our very last breath; for such a determination is very neces-

sary to victory. The mistake made by many is in not realizing how severe the trials and temptations may become—in not realizing the necessity of heavenly assistance in our every time of need. The Apostle wrote, "When I am weak, then am I strong." (2 Corinthians 12:10) By this he doubtless meant, When fully loyal to the Lord, I feel my own weakness and insufficiency, but I am strong because then I rely especially upon heavenly aid—then I watch and pray, and am thus forewarned against the temptations.

Doubtless in the end of this age—in the closing days of this Gospel dispensation—there will come Gethsemane experiences to the church of Christ. Those who will stand those temptations and trials, and come off victorious, will be the ones whose faith and trust in the Lord are strong—those who watch and pray lest they enter into temptation, and who are thus safeguarded against it. As our Lord forewarned St. Peter and the other apostles of their coming trials, so he has forewarned us of the great crucial test near at hand. Let us profit by the experiences of the apostles recorded in this lesson.

"SORROWFUL EVEN UNTO DEATH"

Arrived at the Garden, Jesus left eight of the apostles near the entrance, and went further into its shades with Peter, James and John. All were to watch, to be on guard against something that was to occur, something of which Jesus knew, but which seemed most improbable to the apostles. They were unable to comprehend the Master's pessimism, even though they sympathized with him.

It was midnight, and they were accustomed to retiring early. The strain of the evening, and the weighty lessons which the Master had imparted, reacted in drowsiness. They slept, instead of watching and praying. This was true even of the three nearest to the Master.

Wishing to be alone in his communion with the Father, Jesus went a stone's throw farther into the shades by himself. Time and again, in the agony which came upon him, he came seeking human sympathy, only to find his dearest ones oblivious in sleep. Well had it been expressed by the Prophet, "Of the people there was none with me." (Isa. 63:3) He trod the winepress of grief alone.

Not until he had finished giving admonitions to his apostles and had left some to watch at the entrance of the garden, did the Master seem to give special thought to himself and to the momentous events anticipated within a few hours. As he was leaving his favorite three, he gave utterance to the weight of

oppression which seemed suddenly to rest down upon his soul. He exclaimed, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death!"—I feel as if I would die now, without coming to that great crisis which is before me. We read that "he was greatly amazed and sore troubled." The Greek is equally strong, signifying utter amazement and sore trouble, carrying the thought of loneliness, home-sickness, friendlessness.

THE CAUSE OF THE MASTER'S SORROW

This feeling of wretchedness, despair, which suddenly came upon the Savior, continued for some time; for he went in prayer to the Father three times, petitioning that this hour might pass from him, this terrible oppression which was breaking his heart. The Evangelist Luke, who was a physician, tells that the Master's distress was such that it brought on a bloody sweat. Although this record respecting the bloody sweat is not found in some of the older manuscripts, nevertheless physicians agree that such experiences have occurred to others in great distress.

How shall we explain the great distress of the Master in anticipation of his own death, of which he had knowledge in advance and of which he had told his disciples, assuring them also, as in this lesson, that he would arise from the dead on the third day? Why should the thought of death have so much more terror for the Redeemer than it has had for some of his followers, yes, than it has had for people in general?

Hundreds of martyrs have gone to deaths equally terrible or more so. Hundreds have exhibited great courage, fortitude, in the face of equally horrible deaths. How shall we account for this attitude of the Savior and his so earnestly praying that the hour or the cup might pass from him?

In order to appreciate this question and its proper answer, we must remember how different was the Master from all the remainder of mankind. A death sentence rests upon all the world. We all know that it is merely a question of time when we shall die. We all know that the dying process can last but a few hours at most. Not only have we no hope of escaping death, but by reason of being nine-tenths dead already our intelligent faculties are more or less benumbed. We are more or less reckless, careless, and proportionately fierce.

EXHIBITION OF TRUE COURAGE

There are soldiers who will rush to battle in the face of instant death with apparently not a fear, and there are horses which will do the same thing. The greatest courage, however, is manifested by those who know, understand, appreciate fully, just what they are doing and who greatly fear death, but who notwithstanding press onward in obedience to the command of duty and of love. Jesus was such a soldier. He comprehended, as others had not comprehended, what death really is. He appreciated, as others did not appreciate, the meaning and value of life.

Jesus had left the heavenly glory, divesting himself of the higher nature on the spirit plane, exchanging it for the human nature, because man had sinned and because in the divine purpose and arrangement he was to die, the just for the unjust, as man's redemption-price. This was the Father's will concerning him. He tells us that for this purpose he came into the world. This thought dominated his entire life. Daily he was laying down his life, in doing the will of God and in serving humanity. Now he had come to the great climax.

The heavenly Father had promised that if our Lord was faithful in this work given him to do, he would be raised from the dead by divine power to the spirit plane of being and to a station still higher than he had before. He doubted not the Father's faithfulness in this matter, nor did he doubt the Father's power. But the Father's provision and promise were conditional; only if our Lord would perform his part faithfully would he receive the resurrection to the higher life. If in any sense or degree, great or small, he should yield to sin, the penalty for sin would be upon him—"Dying, thou shalt die."

For three and one-half years his life had been devoted to God and to the doing of the divine will. The only question was, had he done the divine will fully, completely, and absolutely in such a spirit as had been pleasing to the heavenly Father? More than this, could he, would he, pass through the experiences of the next few hours with proper courage, proper faith, proper obedience; or would he fail, and lose his all in death?

NO ADVOCATE FOR THE MASTER

Thus we see how different it was with the Master from what is with any of us who seek to walk in his steps. We have nothing to lose; for as a race we are all under sentence of death. Besides, the followers of Jesus realize that he was the Son of God who died for our sins, and that his merit com-

pensates for our imperfections because we abide in him and desire to do the Father's will.

But had the Master failed, there was no one to make good for him. His failure meant everlasting death. Moreover, it meant the loss of all those special blessings which God had promised him as a reward for special faithfulness. It meant the loss of the great privilege of doing the Father's work in uplifting humanity from sin and death conditions through the Messianic kingdom. In a word, the Master's personal eternal life was in the balance that night in Gethsemane, as also were all his prospects of glory, honor, immortality and high exaltation at the right hand of the Father, far above angels, principalities and powers.

No wonder the Master, realizing all this, was overwhelmed with the thought! No wonder he wished that if it were possible for the divine plan to be otherwise worked out, he might be saved from, spared from, the special tribulations and horrible experiences of the hours just before him! Part of the horrors of that experience surely was the fact that he must be dealt with as a malefactor, as a blasphemer of God, as an enemy of God and of righteousness.

WHAT OUR LORD DREADED

To a debased and depraved soul, this would mean little; but to one full of love and loyalty to the Father such experiences would be terrible—that he who had sacrificed his all, even his heavenly glory and his earthly interests, to do the Father's will, should be considered a blasphemer of God, and that he should be crucified as a malefactor, an injurious person! What a terrible experience to one of the refinement and nobility of soul which Jesus possessed, of whom we read that he "was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners!"

Apparently this ignominy was the thing which Jesus prayed might pass away. He did not pray that he might not die; for he knew that he had come into the world for that purpose, and that only by his death could the death penalty resting against the human family be removed. He had been talking about his death repeatedly; he had not once thought of escaping death. He well knew that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." But he did hope that the Father might have some way of passing by the special ignominy of that hour. Yet even in his greatest distress the Master prayed, "Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."

St. Paul assures us that the Master's Gethsemane experiences were linked with fear—not fear of dying, but fear of remaining dead, fear that he would not be accounted of the Father worthy of that glorious resurrection which had been promised to him on condition of absolute obedience. St. Paul says, "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him out of death [by resurrection], was heard in respect to the things which he feared." (Hebrews 5:7) He was saved out of death; and more than this, he was given the assurance by the Father that he would be saved out of death.

STRENGTHENED FROM ON HIGH

This is the explanation of the statement that an angel of God appeared to him in the Garden and strengthened him—gave him the assurance from the Father that he had been faithful up to that moment, and that the divine blessing would be with him in the hour of trial just at hand. From that moment onward, all the fear and agony were gone. If the Father had approved him thus far, and if the Father's blessing and smile went with him, he could endure all things, come what might. Throughout the remainder of that night and the following day, Jesus was the calmest of the calm, under the most trying circumstances. He comforted those who wept about him; he committed his mother to the faithful St. John, etc.

In these experiences of the Master, we find more or less a repetition in his disciples. When assured that their sins are forgiven, that the Father himself loves them, that his grace is sufficient for them, and that the Redeemer's robe of righteousness covers them, the followers of Jesus can, under such circumstances, be courageous, even while dreading death.

One great difference between the Master and his followers should be remembered: Whereas "of the people there were none" with him, with us it is different; the Master is with us, saying, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Moreover, with us also there is a fellowship of spirit amongst the brethren of Christ, whose words of encouragement by the way, as they watch with us and pray with us, are a source of strength in every time of trouble. Thanking him for all the divine provision and arrangements, let us go onward to our Gethsemane, strong in the strength which God supplies through his Son.

AN UNFAITHFUL TREASURER'S FALL

OCTOBER 25.—Matthew 26:14-25, 47-50; 27:3-10.

“Woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed!”—Matthew 26:24.

Judas hailed from the south of Palestine, while the other eleven of Jesus' disciples were Galileans. It is inferred that because of superior business qualities Judas was made the treasurer of the apostolic company. The friends of Jesus noted the fact that he and his followers needed to give their entire time to the heralding of the kingdom. It is not strange, therefore, that we read that some voluntarily donated money for their support.

We cannot imagine Jesus and his apostles begging for money or even “passing the hat” for a collection. To have done so would have been to discount Jehovah's declaration that all the gold, all the silver, and the cattle upon a thousand hills are his; and to imply that he would have need to ask for assistance. On the contrary, the Scriptures tell us that some voluntarily contributed to the Master's support; for instance, Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and others. (Luke 8:3) Such voluntary donations made it proper that there should be a common treasurer for the company, and that he should be of superior business acumen.

We find no reason for believing that Judas was a bad man at the time of his selection by Jesus to be one of the twelve apostles. We have every reason to believe that he developed a bad character even under the most favorable influences—in the continual company of Jesus and the other apostles, and with the message of the kingdom continually in his ears. There was, however, a beginning to his defections; and the intimation of the Scriptures is that his temptation came along the lines of avarice, selfishness, love of money.

“A ROOT OF ALL EVIL”

Alas, how many honest men have been seduced from the path of righteousness by the love of money! We remember that one of the serious charges which Jesus brought against the Pharisees was that they were money-lovers. It would not seem at all strange if it should prove to be true that the difficulty with many Christians today also is along this line of love of money. It is still true that “the love of money is a root of all evil.” (1 Timothy 6:10) The Apostle declares that through this deception many pierce themselves with sorrow—not always so seriously as did Judas, however.

Judas loved money to such an extent that he was willing to betray his Master for thirty pieces of silver which, on the basis of labor, amounted to between two hundred and three hundred dollars in value. Others have loved money to such an extent that they have sold their consciences to gain wealth. Some have sold the truth for money believing that they would prosper in business better by advocating error. Some have sold the church for money, and have been willing to preach what they did not believe for the hire of money and the approval of men. Some have sold their nation's interests for money, bartering their patriotism.

Surely there is great need for every one to be on guard against the insidious influence of the love of money. But we should clearly distinguish between money and the love of money; for it is the latter which causes ruin and which entraps and ensnares the soul. Money represents toil, labor, accumulation; and as such it should be valued for the good it can do. But to love money, to serve it, to make it an idol and to allow it to alienate our hearts from God, we should not do. Let us not forget that this love of money was the primal cause of Judas' horrible failure.

A FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY

Not at first, but afterward apparently, did the disciples learn that Judas, who carried the treasurer's bag, was a thief. (John 12:6) Doubtless even when appropriating the moneys contributed to the support of the little company of disciples, Judas could have some plausible excuse; for sin is always deceptive. Doubtless he would have said, “I laid the money away, thinking that the time would come when the Master and all of us would have greater need for money, and when my provident foresight would be appreciated.” Brooding on the subject increased his desire for money, and led his active business mind to hatch out the plot for the betrayal of Jesus.

The record is that when Judas perceived that Jesus had been condemned, he had remorse for his action and took back the money to the chief priests, wishing to undo his deed. They laughed at him, declaring that it was no concern of theirs, but his own, if he had betrayed innocent blood. Because the returned money was “blood money,” they could not put it into the Temple treasury again. Instead, they purchased therewith a piece of cheap land, a potter's field, as a burial place for strangers. Thus they fulfilled to the very letter a prophecy which they had probably forgotten: “Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the Prophet, saying,

And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed.”—Matthew 27:9, 10.

The account implies that Judas was surprised when Jesus was condemned. Apparently he surmised that Jesus, brought to the crucial test, would assert himself as the Messiah and would triumph over his enemies. Judas thus probably thought that he would hasten the establishment of the kingdom, in which he hoped to share. For his apology in the end he could say, “Well, we are ahead just thirty pieces of silver; and you may thank me for having brought matters to a climax sooner than otherwise.” Thus he would have shone as a hero, as well as have demonstrated his financial wisdom and his suitability for the post of grand treasurer of the kingdom. But in addition to all this, apparently he got a little angry at Jesus because the Master had approved of Mary's conduct in respect to the spikenard. It was under the impulse of that resentment that he first sought the priests and the scribes to negotiate for the betrayal.

OBLIVION—NO HOPE OF A RESURRECTION

We are not hereby suggesting excuses for Judas. There can be no excuse properly offered for treachery to God and his cause. We are merely pointing out the fact that every transgressor must first consent in his own mind to his wrong course. In other words, the mind, the conscience, must be perverted before each step of sin. Hence the words of Jesus are fully justified: “Woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It had been good for that man if he had not been born.”—Matt. 26:24.

Such treachery, such willingness to hand over his Friend, his Teacher, and the One whom he had accepted as the Son of God and through whom he had expected the Messianic kingdom, was perfidy of the worst type. With all the other apostles, Judas had been called to walk in the footsteps of Jesus and to become a sharer with him in the sufferings and trials incidental to loyalty to the truth, misunderstood by the people, and if faithful to receive with his Master a share in the heavenly kingdom, which is to bless the world. Judas, with the others, had preached the kingdom, had cast out demons, and had healed the sick, by the power of God operating through the name of Jesus. He had been constantly with the Savior, and knew of the purity of his life, knew of his loyalty to God. Therefore all these things constituted his responsibility and his guilt.

The fact that he suicided implied a fulfillment of Jesus' words—that Judas wished that he had never been born. Every one who suicides declares the same fact. Yet there may be hope for other suicides, because of their ignorance, and because Christ died for all; and they, with others, must surely have a blessing and an opportunity for everlasting life as a result.

But in the case of Judas, all this was discounted by the fact that he had already enjoyed such privileges, opportunity and knowledge, and had sinned against light and knowledge. The declaration that he went to his own place, his appropriate place, does not signify that Judas or anybody else is to be eternally tortured as a punishment for sin. Rather, his own place was oblivion, hopeless oblivion, without prospect of a resurrection. He died like a natural brute beast, nor could argument be shown why such a character, who had enjoyed such privileges, should ever have any future opportunity.

HARMONY OF TWO RECORDS

As to the fate of Judas, one Scripture tells us that he went and hanged himself. (Matthew 27:5) Another Scripture declares that his iniquity accomplished the purchase of a field; and that, falling headlong, he burst asunder, and his bowels gushed out. (Acts 1:18) To harmonize these two accounts is very simple. Both are true. To hang himself, he probably chose the branch of a tree overhanging a precipice, where he could the more easily accomplish his purpose. If under the strain the rope broke, we can readily see how his headlong fall took place.

However, the matter of his death is of slight importance. The important thing is to notice how his soul died, in that he lost his relationship with God and with Christ, and all hope therefore of a future life. Yet the Master was gentle toward him to the very last, giving him every opportunity to relent and to retrace his steps, down to the very last act.

The fact that God had foreknown from the beginning that one of the twelve would betray Jesus, the fact that the purchase of the field with the blood money had already been prophesied, did not alter the responsibility of Judas for his

own fall. It was not God's foreknowledge that injured Judas, but his own wrong course; and thus it is with all. God's knowing from the beginning whatsoever will come to pass does not affect us, for he merely knows in respect to us what we will do of our own volition, our own yielding to avarice, to sin.

The testimony that Jesus knew in advance who would betray him does not prove that Jesus knew this at the time when

he chose Judas. He knew that the Scriptures intimated that one of his disciples would betray him; and from the beginning of the deflection of Judas toward sin, toward avarice, Jesus knew that he must be the one who would commit the traitorous deed; yet in no sense of the word did Jesus' conduct lead Judas to the wrong, but rather forewarned him to the contrary.

TAKE UP THY CROSS AND FOLLOW CHRIST

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me."—Matt. 16:24.

This is a very beautiful and significant text. The words "come after me" have not been properly translated; "follow me" is a better translation. It was the custom in ancient times for a teacher to have a company of his disciples following him; as Socrates did, for instance. So our Lord's disciples, pupils, followed him. They traveled with him that they might have the opportunity of continually getting instruction from his lips. It was so with all the teachers in the olden time. Sometimes, as in the case of Gamaliel, they had a school—the pupils sat "at the feet of Gamaliel." They would discuss questions much as we do at "Bethel" table today. Their custom was that the pupils would ask questions and get the views of the teacher.

Jesus said that any one whom he instructed might know from the beginning that he would have severe experiences; he would not receive great honor. On the contrary, those who would be his disciples must take up their cross and follow in his footsteps. There would be trials all along the journey, he told them. The Lord did not wish any to become disciples of his under a misapprehension. "Where I am, there shall also my disciple be." Those who follow Jesus in this vale of tears, witnessing for God and the truth, will be blessed by him and eventually share in his Messianic glory and honor and partake of immortality. But unless we partake of his cup and are immersed into his death, we can have no share in his kingdom.

OUR CONVENTION TOUR

The blessing of our heavenly Father has surely been with us richly on our Western Convention trip. Everywhere the European conflagration was the topic of absorbing interest. Many are convinced that the consummation of the Gospel age is at hand, and everywhere the household of faith are lifting up their heads and rejoicing that their deliverance is drawing nigh, as our Lord foretold in his great prophecy, recorded in Matthew 24 and parallel Scriptures.

The Editor and his stenographers left Brooklyn on August 23 and arrived at Chicago on the 24th, in time for the inauguration of the I. B. S. A. Temple. This building has been leased by the Chicago friends for the use of the local Ecclesia and for the Photo-Drama of Creation, and is well adapted for its purpose, being centrally located. The attendance was 1250 interested. The attention was excellent.

From Chicago the party sped westward, and arrived at Spokane, Wash., on August 27. Here we spoke to an audience of deeply interested Bible Students, numbering about two hundred. Thence we went to Everett, August 28, where a public meeting had been arranged for. About six hundred were present and gave the closest attention to the discourse. At Bellingham, August 29, fourteen hundred were at the public meeting.

From Bellingham the little party went to Vancouver, B. C., where seven hundred greeted them, giving very close attention to the discourse. August 30 was given to Seattle, Wash., where twenty-six hundred heard the address. Here, as elsewhere, the friends are very earnest and zealous. Thence we hastened to Tacoma, August 31, where fifteen hundred were in attendance.

Our next stop was at Santa Cruz, Cal. Here an interesting and profitable eight-day Convention of Bible Students was in session. The attendance was estimated to be about seven hundred and fifty, chiefly from the Pacific States. The party remained at the Convention about four days, September 2-4. The Photo-Drama was shown four evenings, and was greatly enjoyed by many of the citizens.

September 10 was devoted to a one-day convention at San Diego. Twelve hundred were in attendance at the public meeting, and many were turned away, for whose benefit an overflow meeting was arranged. September 11 the party were at Los Angeles, where the attendance was thirty-five hundred. September 13, at Salt Lake City, thirty-two hundred were in attendance. Thence we went to Denver, September 15, where six hundred friends listened to the discourse. Next was Colorado Springs, September 16, where eight hundred were in attendance.

Then the party went South to Fort Worth, Texas, where a three-day convention was in progress, with four hundred and fifty Bible Students present. While this convention was not large, yet it was full of interest. Then came San Antonio, September 19, where twenty-one hundred listened with deep attention to a discourse on up-to-date topics. At Houston, September 20, twenty-four hundred assembled to hear the address, and nearly as many were turned away. On September 21, at Beaumont, Texas, nine hundred listened with deep appreciation.

Continuing our journey, we reached New Orleans, September 22, where one thousand heard us. At Birmingham, Ala., September 24, fifteen hundred were present. Thence we went to Atlanta, Ga., where a four-day convention met, September 24-27, with approximately four hundred and fifty in attendance, the delegates representing many states. After leaving our Atlanta friends, we hurried on to the Saratoga convention.

The Saratoga convention, although not a large one, was an extremely interesting gathering. The convention proper numbered about 950. Some of the meetings ran up considerably more through local interest. One thing noticeable in this convention, as well as at all the others, was the meek and quiet spirit of those in attendance. While all lifted up their heads rejoicing that our deliverance is near and hasteth greatly, nevertheless there was no spirit of excitement. Rather all seemed to realize that we have received of the Lord blessed promises and enlightenments which far more than repay for our trials and difficulties. All were resolved that the whole world would not compare with the light and peace and hope already ours—not to mention the glorious things expected soon. Surely we prefer God's time, as well as God's plan, above all others. If he but continue us in his favor, in the future as in the past, we may well rejoice in the experiences coming day by day, end when they may.

During our trip we continually encouraged the dear household of faith to await God's time for the accomplishment of our hopes, preferring it to our own, if different. While we everywhere noted that patient waiting was manifested, yet, on the other hand, we deplored the over-confidence of some respecting the exact time of the glorification of the church. We endeavored to distinguish between our hope and the time of its fulfillment, and urged all to cast not away their confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. However, the present great war certainly stimulates our confidence in every feature of the divine program.

CLASSES CO-OPERATING IN EUREKA DRAMA NO. "Y"

A number of classes find that the financing of Drama No. "Y" is heavier than they can afford, and are planning to join their forces with other classes—two or three classes, for instance, taking the Drama between them. This is quite agreeable to us. However, the Society does not wish to sell the Parts separately, but would rather recommend that the whole outfit be ordered together, and handled on a partnership basis.

In addition to costing less for each class, it will require fewer operators from each class.

Incidentally, we urge that the speaking elders of the classes do not neglect the home service. Younger brethren, not used at all to speaking, and some sisters, make very acceptable operators for the Drama. The speaking elders might follow the Drama, giving Chart Talks, etc.