

sibly adding somewhat to the impression, I am sending out to ecclesias in this vicinity some suggestions, of which the enclosed is a copy:—

- (1) Berean Study is as old as the church.
- (2) The volumes—STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES—like the Scriptures themselves, are full of interrogation points—that is, they suggest questions everywhere.
- (3) The average mind is not competent to make the best arrangement of these questions—linking them together in their proper, logical order.
- (4) The arranged Questions, furnished by the Brooklyn Tabernacle, supply this lack.
- (5) These "Question" Studies have been with us for years.
- (6) The Bethel "Table Talks" are on the same general plan—surely a forceful demonstration and endorsement of the method.
- (7) They foster concentration of thought, and give a definite aim in study.
- (8) They develop ability in analyzing subjects.
- (9) They assist all the members of a class to study along uniform lines.
- (10) The church being made up of separate ecclesias, in proportion as the method is followed by the different ecclesias, the church as a whole is studying along uniform lines.
- (11) We acknowledge the value of uniformity by our unanimous adoption of it in use of daily hymns and daily Manna.
- (12) They make the leader of a class less a teacher, thus dividing up with the class, more fully, the responsibility for development.
- (13) It encourages class study, which is surely discouraged in proportion as the leader, either from inclination or as the result of less practical methods, monopolizes the explanation of Studies.
- (14) It supplies the best basis for study of the lesson beforehand, and neglect of this spells proportionate failure in any method of class work.
- (15) Each member of a class has a responsibility in this respect which he or she cannot afford to ignore. (It is our opinion that where classes fail to make the method practical the main difficulty lies (a) in a lack of preparatory study; (b) in failure of the leader to impress its importance.)

(16) Where an ecclesia lacks "speaking" talent, it supplies a good substitute, and we believe in many cases more than a substitute. We incline to the conviction that less dependence on preaching and more on "class" study should be the order.

(17) Should the appointed leader be absent from any "study," the class thus equipped could carry along the study without interruption, any member reasonably well-informed being competent to take charge.

(18) If for any reason it should not be deemed wise to have a regularly appointed leader, different members would be prepared to lead in turn—each member recognizing such a one as leader, while filling the office, directing all questions and answers to him—thus holding the class to order as effectually as though they had a regularly appointed leader.

(19) Any answer to a question should be supported by at least two good Scriptures. If each member recognizes his or her responsibility in finding these Scriptures, it will guarantee a study which should make any subject interesting to any visitor present who is interested in the Bible.

(20) Should any question come up on any paragraph, after those prescribed for the study have been dealt with, the leader, by turning it over to the class, instead of answering himself, will make the study the more helpful. (This method of turning questions over to the class would often avoid a delicate situation, should the question be such as would call for an answer which might not be acceptable to the questioner. The leader, in thus sharing the responsibility with the class, could express himself the more freely, and no special objection could be taken.)

(21) With the "Berean Question" method uniformly followed, in any "study" where a specific number of questions are marked off, and kept up with, we would be at home if temporarily present with any class the world over.

(22) Additionally, we all desire to be as closely in touch with the "isolated" ones as possible, and it would seem that nothing could operate more effectually in this direction than the widest possible application of this principle of oneness in study.

(23) The fact that the Society is continually urging this method gives the unmistakable inference that WE NEED IT.
Your brother in service, W. W. BLACK.

THE LAW MAGNIFIED AND MADE HONORABLE

"The Lord . . . will magnify the law and make it honorable."—Isa. 42:21.

"Where there is no law there is no transgression." (Rom. 4:15.), would seem to be an axiom—a self-evident truth. No one could transgress a law that was not given to him, that was not applicable to him. In his discussion of the Jewish view of the Mosaic Law, St. Paul used this statement to show that the Jews misunderstood the matter. They had the thought that because God had given them the law at Mt. Sinai, they were justified in God's sight by that law. But receiving a law is not keeping that law. Therefore, the apostle shows them that by the deeds of the law no flesh could be justified in God's sight.—Rom. 3:20.

Continuing the argument a little further, St. Paul shows that the entire human race was once in God's favor, as represented in Adam before sin entered. While the race was in that condition of perfection mankind was just before God. But when sin entered, it brought the penalty of alienation from God and of death. Thenceforth the human race was dead in trespasses and in sin, having no right to everlasting life. In that condition God did not give mankind a law, but permitted the world to go without law up to the time of Moses. And even in the time of Moses God did not give the law to the whole world, but only to the Jewish nation. If Israel had been able to keep the law that was given to them at Mt. Sinai, they would have been a living nation—not a dying nation, as the other nations are.

The apostle proceeds to say that the commandment, which was ordained to life, Israel found to be unto death. (Rom. 7:10) A man cannot be justified by receiving the law, but by keeping the law. The rest of the world were less condemned than the Jews, for, says the apostle, God did not give them that law and they never came under the penalty of that law. So, then, Israel found the law to work death; and they were under more condemnation than were any other people in the world; for they were condemned, not only in Adam, but also by failure to keep the law. By the Law Covenant given on Mt. Sinai, they were lifted out of the Adamic condemnation and put on

trial afresh; and when they failed to keep that law, they had a second condemnation put upon them.

St. Paul is here demonstrating the mistake of thinking that the Law Covenant gave Israel a special immunity from condemnation. Then he shows that there are some Gentiles who have never come under the Law Covenant, as did the Jew, but who, nevertheless, show a work of progress, which the Jew had not done; for these Gentiles show a law of love ruling in their hearts. In some respects they judge themselves, and in other respects their consciences excuse or accuse them.

The apostle says that since the Jews are condemned by the law given at Mt. Sinai, and since the rest of the world recognize by their consciences that they are condemned, then the whole world stands guilty in God's sight. What then is that which condemns the Gentiles? The answer is, The original law of God remaining in their hearts, though marred by the fall.

God created our first parents in such a condition of perfection that the law of God was clear, or manifest, to them instinctively. Now, because of the fall, if a man were to use his moral perceptions alone, one man might say that a thing is wrong, and another might say that it is right; each would be guided by his own mind, his own conscience. St. Paul's argument is that no matter how fallen a man may be, he still has so much of the original law in his heart that his conscience will either accuse him of wrong-doing or excuse his conduct; and unless extremely degraded he will know that it is wrong to steal or to take human life.

To whatever extent a man retains this original law of God to that extent he is responsible. No one can sufficiently excuse himself so as to say that he is worthy of eternal life. The Jew could not claim that he had kept the law, for his atonement for sin was an acknowledgment that he had failed to do so; and the Gentile's conscience testified to his unworthiness. Therefore, neither was deserving of eternal life. Continuing his argument the apostle explains that none of the fallen race

can obtain eternal life except by the way that God has provided; and that way is in Christ alone. By the divine arrangement Christ, who was perfect, was made flesh and gave himself on behalf of Adam and his race, so that God can be just and still be the justifier of him who believes in Jesus.—Rom. 3:26.

Neither Jew nor Gentile can have eternal life except as the result of faith in Jesus Christ. The apostle tells us that we cannot merit eternal life, but that we must do all in our power to manifest that if we were perfect we would keep God's law, and that in proportion as we know the divine will, the divine law, we should prove our desire to be in harmony with God by doing his will to the best of our ability. The merit of Christ will off-set, compensate for, the weaknesses of the flesh through heredity, and ultimately we shall attain to full perfection. But none except those who show their willingness to keep the law will reach this perfection; they must be willing to spare no effort to keep that law, so far as in them lies.

TWO CLASSES RELEASED FROM ADAMIC CONDEMNATION

"Where no law is there is no transgression," for "sin is not imputed when there is no law." (Rom. 4:15; 5:13.) The world has not yet come under individual condemnation; for the world has not yet been placed under divine law. Why not? Up to the present time the world is under the Adamic sentence, and only those who are lifted out of that condemnation can come under another sentence. The whole world was condemned to death under Father Adam, and mankind cannot be sentenced again until they get out from under the first condemnation. The only ones who have, in any sense of the word, been released from this Adamic condemnation are two classes; the natural Israelites and the spiritual Israelites. The Jews could not be tried for life or death without a release in one form or another from the Adamic condemnation. This release they obtained by the Law Covenant; but it was only typical, for the blood of bulls and goats can never take away sin.—Heb. 10:4.

The only ones who have been actually released are those Jews who came under the covenant of sacrifice, the covenant which began with the Gospel age with Christ, and those Gentiles who have entered into this covenant relationship with Christ. As many of these as have entered into this relationship are on trial before divine law, and subject to eternal life or eternal death under that law. If obedient to that law they will get eternal life. If disobedient to that law of the spirit of life, and if they wilfully sin after having been begotten of the Spirit, they will get death.

In the case of the Jew it would be the second death if their Law Covenant had been the full and complete covenant which God intended for them. But it was not; it was merely a tentative covenant to give them a tentative offer of eternal life; it was simply a typical covenant. The real one is that which God intended should come in the New Covenant. "The days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt" (Jer. 31:31, 32); God will make a New Covenant with them. He will take away the stony heart out of their flesh and will give them a heart of flesh, that they may keep his statutes and ordinance and do them (Ezek. 11:19), under his New Covenant—the real Law Covenant.

Under that real Law Covenant every Jew will have the fullest opportunity of coming into harmony with God. And the basis of that harmony will be the "better sacrifice" than the typical ones, which Moses offered. The great Mediator will be the Messiah—Christ the Head and the church his body. And that great Mediator has the basis of his power in the fact that he has provided the "better sacrifices." He provided first his own sacrifice; and during the Gospel age he has been providing other sacrifices—those who came unto the Father by him.

THE LAW AN INDICATION OF GOD'S WILL

The church of this Gospel age is not under the Jewish Law Covenant; for that Law Covenant was given to the Jew and not to the Gentile nor to the Christian church. We are not to speak of ourselves as "Gentiles" or as "Jews," but as the church of God. God has made a different covenant with us; it is spoken of as a covenant of sacrifice: "Gather my saints together under me; those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." (Psa. 50:5.) This covenant has been made individually with the entire church of Christ.

Shall we say, then, that the Gospel church is without a law? By no means! We are not under that Law Covenant—the covenant which demands of us to keep that law and which binds us to keep it. But we are under a covenant of Grace—a covenant which makes special provision for us—for our inability to do perfectly. Nevertheless we are still under divine law.

Every intelligent creature is under divine law. To the extent of her knowledge the church will be responsible to the law of God.

How may we know the law of God? We may know of it in part by the Jewish law and the Ten Commandments. Do we ignore the Ten Commandments? By no means. We appreciate them as showing us the law of God. It is one thing to strive to keep them in mind, in spirit, and a totally different thing to keep them inviolate, as those under the law covenanted to do; for whoever breaks one of the commandments breaks them all. (James 2:10.) We are therefore not under the law, but under grace. (Rom. 6:14) That same law which God gave to Israel, so beautifully represented on tables of stone, is not over us; but the spirit of that law is applicable to us. St. Paul says that the righteousness of the law, the true keeping of the law, is fulfilled in us, the Gospel church, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.—Rom. 8:4.

With the Gospel church God is dealing differently from the manner in which he dealt with the Jewish people. God's arrangement with the Jews was that they should keep the law both in letter and in spirit, or else they would be condemned. His arrangement with the Gospel church is that they should fulfill that law to the best of their ability, and that the merit of Christ will make up for their deficiency. While we of the Gospel church would like to keep the law we are as unable to keep it, as were the Jews, on account of the weakness of the flesh. Every Christian should feel that he is strictly under obligation to the divine law more than are those who are not Christians, because of his greater enlightenment in divine things, in the instructions of Christ and the apostles and of the holy spirit. Not only is he to seek to live up to the requirements of the law, but he covenants to do much more. He covenants to sacrifice even those rights which he would have under the law, and to present his body a sacrifice, not even calling for his own rights under the law.

OBEDIENCE TO THE EXTENT OF ABILITY

We keep the spirit of the Ten Commandments because it is the spirit of righteousness, the Spirit of God. We have become God's children; and having his Spirit, we are to do those things which are pleasing to him. If, therefore, we can from the Ten Commandments learn what things are pleasing to him, then they are lessons that we should learn. If any other thing shows us what is pleasing to God, we are to do it. But we are not under the Law Covenant. We do not hope for eternal life by keeping it. God's arrangement for us is that being obedient to the extent of our ability and having the spirit of the law in our hearts, we are counted as perfect in his sight and will receive his blessing.

Some of the Jews thought that they kept the Ten Commandments, yet to their surprise they did not get eternal life. The teachings of Jesus and the apostles show us that every one of the commandments of the law had a deeper meaning than the Jews could discern, and that their failure to perceive the spirit of the law was one of the reasons why they could not get eternal life. Take the commandment which says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Some people really have other gods in their hearts; some idolize their husbands; with others their wives have the first place; with some it is their stocks and bonds. This is idolatry.

The Scriptures tell us that the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," has a deeper significance than to take life. He who is angry with his brother, he who would like the opportunity to kill and who abstains from so doing merely because of fear, is in his heart a murderer. Similarly, the Master says, He that looks upon a woman to lust after her commits adultery in his heart; he is restrained only because of lack of opportunity.

When we begin to get the deeper view of the teachings of the Ten Commandments we see how the Lord magnified the law and made it honorable. (Isa. 42:21.) But the fact that Jesus was able to keep the law shows that God did not give an unjust law; that it could be kept; that the weakness was in the fallen condition of humanity, and not in the law.

THE SABBATH OF FAITH IN JESUS' FINISHED WORK

Now as these other commandments have a higher and deeper meaning than that which appears upon the surface, so also has the fourth commandment, which relates to the Sabbath day. The Apostle Paul gives us the key to this higher meaning when he says that this Seventh day typifies the rest of faith for the people of God. (Heb. 4:9, 10.) Whoever abides in Christ is a Sabbath-keeper, and those who do not abide in him lose this rest and thus fail to be Sabbath-keepers. There is a still further expansion of the Sabbath in its typical significance to the thousand-year day. Then humanity will be at rest from Satan, from sin, from the trials, besetments and difficulties of the present time; and all mankind will have

an opportunity of entering into this rest. The church will enter into it first, in her resurrection. Next the Jew will enter into that rest, when he shall understand God's plan and become the recipient of God's blessing and eternal favors in the Millennial day; and finally, before its close, all the world will come under its blessed influence. This was the promise of God to Abraham when he said, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 12:3.) They will be blessed in the wonderful provisions of that great Sabbath day.

The fourth commandment was never given to us, and we are not enjoined to keep the seventh day either in the letter or in the spirit. The Sabbath day was never given to the church. A higher thought than that of physical rest is given us. God has provided for us a rest of faith in Christ's finished work. We may enjoy our rest seven days of the week, and every day in the year. If we begin to appreciate that thought we have a rest about which the Jew knows nothing. This is an earnest of the future when we shall be through with all our difficulties and shall remain ever in the rest of God.

SUNDAY AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE NEW ORDER OF EVENTS

We are not under commandments ourselves in God's sight; we are not under obligation to keep any day of the week. Why do we observe a Sabbath? Because of our own volition. The law of this land provides for the keeping of Sunday. We are glad that the law makes this provision for a quiet day once a week. We are pleased to have it so, and would not have any objection if there were two Sundays each week. We do think that the day chosen is a beautiful reminder of our Lord's resurrection. It is also a fine illustration of the new order of things so soon to be established; and it is a very appropriate day for us. As for the world, quite probably, under the New Covenant there will be a day set special for them in which they will rest from labors, etc. Perhaps it will be the seventh day.

SONS NOT UNDER LAW OF SERVANTS

It is nowhere said that Christians are to keep both the spirit and letter of the Ten Commandments. If it were so stated, we would be under that law as were the Jews, who

although bound by their covenant to keep every jot and tittle of the law, could do no more than to observe the spirit of the law and to endeavor to keep, so far as possible, the letter also.

Christians are under grace; for they are sons of God by adoption. A son has many privileges which a servant does not have. To illustrate: Suppose we had been adopted into a millionaire's family. Upon going to the new home, as we look around we notice certain inscriptions over doorways; as, for instance, "Servants' Entrance," "Tradesmen's Entrance," "Servants' Washroom," "Servants' Quarters," etc. Upon further observation we discover various rules put up, regulating the duties and affairs of the servants in general. These we read, and thereby gain information as to the will of our kind friend. We ask ourself, "Do I come under this classification? No, for I have been adopted into the family. These are not for me. Yet from these instructions I perceive something of the law of the house, but I have duties and privileges far beyond those of a servant; I am a son and have privileges corresponding thereto."

So, the apostle says, God deals with us as with sons. He has not given us the Ten Commandments. Why not? It would be an insult to give us his Spirit, his mind, etc., and yet put us under a command which would imply that we had not received his Spirit. It would be quite inconsistent to say to a new creature, "Do not steal, do not commit murder." The new creature would not want to steal or to murder. The more we know about the law given to Israel the more we appreciate it, the better we comprehend the divine standpoint for everything. So while we may get some good out of that law given to servants, we realize that it is not a command given to us, although it gives us some idea of what a son should do. Those commands should make us know better what is the Father's will; and thus we are better able to do that will.

In proportion as we learn to appreciate the Father's will and to copy the principles underlying the divine character, we as new creatures are "changed" from glory to glory of heart quality. And thus changed in our hearts, our minds, our wills, our conduct, we become fit or "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."—Col. 1:12.

"YE ARE NOT UNDER THE LAW, BUT UNDER GRACE"

God has one law only for his intelligent creatures. This law, therefore, in whatever form it may be stated, whether more elaborate or more condensed, is applicable to angels, to men and to the new creation. There is no higher law and there could be none.

This law is based on justice, and finds expression in Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:37-40; Lev. 19:18. It would not be reasonable to demand that one should do more for another than for himself. To do so may be invited; it may be suggested to us; but there would never be a command that a man should do more for another than for himself; for such a command would be unjust. Thus we differentiate between justice and love. "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13:10), and might go much further than would justice. In the case of the church, however, there is a special proposition made—not merely that we shall love, but that we shall love on the highest plane of life.

A HIGHER COMMANDMENT

The consideration set before Jesus and before his followers for carrying out this proposition is glory, honor and immortality—the divine nature; and for this joy we have engaged, not only to keep the law, but additionally to seek to have love beyond the commandments of the law. Under this arrangement we have agreed to do more than to love our neighbors as ourselves. We have agreed to lay down our lives for the brethren. This is a special requirement, which could not be expected from anyone aside from sacrifice.

Our relationship with the Lord is under this special covenant of sacrifice, as expressed in the words, "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." (Psa. 50:5.) These, the apostle tells us, are not without law, but are under law in Christ. This law in Christ is the law of their covenant, which is the law of love. A sacrificing love being beyond any requirement of justice, it necessarily follows that anything which they would do beyond the requirement of love would also fulfill the requirements of the law laid down by justice—the lesser being comprehended in the greater. This law of love would be a still higher law; as Jesus expressed it, "A new commandment (a higher commandment) I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another"—John 13:34.

When the apostle says, "Ye are not under the law, but under grace," he probably has special reference to the fact that

Christians who had come from among the Gentiles had never been under the law arrangement, but that their first experience under the law was under this Grace arrangement in Christ. However, in the case of the Jews who had been under the Law Covenant, he declares that they were freed from the law to which they had been bound; and he speaks as if the law was a very severe requirement which they had been unable to keep, and from which release was a great blessing. The Law Covenant proposed everlasting life upon the terms of keeping the law. "This do, and thou shalt live."—Lev. 18:5; Rom. 10:5; Luke 10:28.

Since all the Jews, like the rest of mankind, were imperfect because of the fall, therefore no Jew could keep that law, and consequently no Jew could ever attain everlasting life. Being unable to keep the law he could not get a reward. But he was really bound by that covenant; for there was no other covenant offered to him up to the time when the Gospel was offered. Then, for him, a special arrangement was made—a covenant of sacrifice. He was freed from the Law Covenant in the sense that he was released from the law.

By becoming dead to the law the Jews had an opportunity to get life in another way. By abandoning all hopes of getting everlasting life through the law, they could receive a new hope in Christ; namely, that under the arrangement in Christ, the great Advocate, they might have fellowship with him now in his suffering and later in his glory, which, by the Father's arrangement, he will share with all those who become his followers.

From the time, then, that the Jews became dead to the law, by abandoning all hope of getting life by obedience to it, he came into this one hope, which could be attained only through sacrifice. But he was still bound to do what is right. But this arrangement to do what is right is for the new creature, not for the old creature, which is reckoned dead. The new creature, however, has purposed to do God's law and more. Such sacrifice all earthly hopes. So of these it is said, "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new!" (2 Cor. 5:17.) They are no longer under the Law Covenant, but under the arrangement of grace, or God's favor.

It is a great privilege to offer ourselves in sacrifice and to get so great a reward in return. This is a great favor under grace. But there is another sense in which we are under grace; namely, the arrangement was made not only by which we get a

reward for doing so little, but by which our sacrifice is made acceptable. This also is grace. Grace means what the Lord does for us freely, not as a reward of any kind.

What our Lord does for us is to make our sacrifice acceptable. Then grace still pursues us and grants us blessings all the way; for, having undertaken to follow Jesus, we could not carry out our sacrifice. We find it impossible to do things perfectly, because we have imperfect bodies. But through the arrangement made for us in Christ, these imperfections will be forgiven. In order that these may be forgiven, it is necessary that we come with courage to the throne of heavenly grace that we may obtain help in time of need.—Heb. 4:16.

A REWARD IS NOT OF GRACE

So then we see three things: First, that there is a law higher than justice, a law of love, a law of sacrifice; second, that God proffers us a reward for walking in the footsteps of Jesus, sacrificing self even unto death; and third, that he covers our unwilling imperfections by the Robe of Christ's Righteousness, in order that we may perform acceptably our part of the contract.

Now, a reward is not of grace. If we offer a man \$5 for doing a certain piece of work, we should not say after the work is done, "This is a matter of grace, and we will not give you the \$5, but \$1." To do so would not be right. To pay what we agreed to give is a matter of justice. So, then, it was grace to offer a reward for walking in the footsteps of Christ Jesus. But once the offer has been made, it becomes an obligation.

It is a contract; it is a covenant, of sacrifice on our part, of reward on God's part. Jesus said, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne." To give the reward after the terms have been complied with, will not be grace, but justice.

Again, grace provides the Redeemer's sacrifice on our behalf—not only for our original sin, but for all trespasses on the way. When the apostle says that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, he is not speaking of the church as under that Law Covenant; but he is saying that while the Jews could not keep that law because of the imperfections of their flesh, yet the church keeps that law, for it does not apply to our flesh, but to our spirit. Hence, the ability to keep that law we, as old creatures, do not have; and we could not thus keep the law any more than they. But we as new creatures should be accounted as not only keeping that law, but as keeping the law of sacrifice.

The little flock will keep the law of sacrifice. The great company will keep the law in the spirit of their minds; but failing to do more they will lose the great reward of glory and honor. So, then, those of the consecrated who keep the law of love, the law of sacrifice, will be accounted as worthy of glory and honor with Christ Jesus. And those who fail to keep this law of sacrifice, but who maintain the law of justice, will finally be accounted worthy of everlasting life, but not of immortality.

THE LIFE-RIGHTS OF THE ANCIENT WORTHIES

Right to life is one thing, but right to eternal life is another. Adam had the right to live, which would have been eternal if by obedience, he had demonstrated his worthiness to live forever. So with the ancient worthies; when raised from the dead they will have the right to live, but only through the Mediator. They will not have life-rights of their own, for there are no such rights except those which are recognized by the Father and justice. The Apostle Paul tells us that already the ancient worthies have the divine approval. But although they pleased God, he did not give them eternal life; and although they shall please the Mediator, he will not turn them over to the Father, to justice, until the end of the Millennial age.

The Scriptures say also that all live unto God (Luke 20:38), for from his standpoint they only sleep. (See Deut. 31:16; John 11:11, etc.) Not the ancient worthies alone, but the rest of the world live unto God in the same sense, although they were not counted acceptable to him. He has made provision for them through the Mediator, but that provision will not be complete until the end of the Millennial age. The ancient worthies, approved of God, had this testimony, that they "pleased God," in that they came up to the standard—perfection of heart-intention and obedience to the extent of ability. While he approved them, nevertheless they did not have eternal life given them nor was any right of eternal life recognized.

God has, however, made provision whereby all of Adam's race will be redeemed and have the opportunity of gaining eternal life. This provision will, of course, include not only the ancient worthies, but also the remainder of mankind.

LIFE THROUGH THE MEDIATOR

This arrangement made by God is not, however, outside of the Mediator, for through the Mediator alone will mankind, including the ancient worthies, obtain eternal life. (The only exception to this provision of the Mediator is the church class, who come to the Father through Christ's acting as their Advocate.) Hence the ancient worthies cannot come by any different route. They must be recognized of the Father through the Mediator; for since they are not joint-heirs with Christ, they must come in under the other class, during the period in which the Mediator will deal with the world as a whole. The process of dealing with the world as a whole will go on, and not until the end of the Millennium will the Christ deliver any of them over to the Father.

The Lord Jehovah has made a plan by which he can, through his Son deal with mankind. That plan is that "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the son." (John 5:22) Hence the Father, aside from his Son, did not judge the ancient worthies. But they may expect a blessing in God's own time and season—in "due time"—when Messiah will have taken his power and begun his reign; and particularly at the end of that reign, when the Son shall have delivered up the kingdom to the Father.—1 Cor. 15:24.

The Father is not taking any cognizance of this arrange-

ment for the blessing of the world, but is leaving it all for the great Messiah, who will be their Mediator, their great High Priest, making reconciliation, mediation. When the mediation, arranged for from before the foundation of the world, shall have been accomplished, it will be satisfactory to the ancient worthies, who will have been "rulers in all the earth," and to mankind as a whole.

ANCIENT WORTHIES UNDER THE MEDIATOR

The question as to whether the ancient worthies will have life-rights when they come forth, may be viewed from different standpoints. According to the teachings of the Scriptures, whoever is perfect is worthy of eternal life. We understand the Scriptures to teach that the ancient worthies will come forth from the tomb perfect, lacking nothing. We would be inclined to say, then, that being perfect they would come within the divine arrangement that whoever is perfect shall live. But we must remember that God is the Judge of all. (Heb. 12:23.) Yet, even so far as the ancient worthies are concerned, they will not have direct dealings with God during the Millennial age. Personally, they will be ready thus to deal; but God in his wisdom has seen fit to deal with them through the Redeemer, the Prophet or Teacher, the Priest, the Mediator of the whole world of mankind. And since the whole world of mankind is not ready to be turned over to the Father, the ancient worthies must wait until the remainder are delivered over into the hands of the Father, the Great Judge of all.

At the end of the Millennium, the whole world of perfected humanity will be turned over to the Father. (1 Cor. 15:24.) As soon as he accepts them they will stand in the same position in which Adam stood when he was perfect. But as Adam was required to be tested, so the whole world of mankind will be tested in the same condition of perfection in which Adam was. Divine justice must test their worthiness of life eternal before it will be granted.

SECOND RANK IN THE WORK OF SALVATION

The various statements regarding the ancient worthies all give the impression that, by their voluntary course, they reached the point where they were pleasing to God. And the Apostle Paul declares that these ancient worthies all died in faith, not having received the blessing of eternal life, because God had some better thing for us, the church, that they without us should not be made perfect. (Heb. 11:13, 39, 40.) In other words, while they had the testimony that they pleased God, they are not to have first rank, but second, in the work of salvation. They could not receive their blessing, their perfection, until, in the outworking of the divine plan, Messiah has taken his kingdom and his bride has been perfected. Then they shall have their restitution blessings.

The fact that the apostle says also that the ancient worthies desired "a better resurrection," implies that the resurrection given to them will be better than that given to the remainder of mankind, in that they will be worthy of having perfection of life at the time of first coming forth from the tomb, while

the resurrection of the others will be gradual after they come forth. "Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets"—all the ancient worthies—will be awakened from death fully restored to human perfection; and will not require a "resurrection by judgment," a thousand years long, as will the residue of mankind.

The ancient worthies will come back in exactly the same condition that Adam was before the fall; but they will have the advantage of greater experience than he had. Adam was perfect; these will be perfect. Adam had no experience with sin; these will have had much experience with sin. These experiences tended to develop character; that is to say, they brought about a favorable determination in respect to righteousness; the testing that came to them was to demonstrate their obedience to God, their loyalty to his will. To maintain this loyalty many of them laid down their lives.

While these ancient worthies will have neither part nor lot in the spiritual kingdom, because not called thereto—that high, or "heavenly calling" not being possible until after the ransom had been laid down by our Lord Jesus—yet they will occupy a position of preferment above the world, having attested their faith and love during the reign of evil, in a manner approved of God. Thus they were prepared and proved worthy to be the earthly ministers and representatives of the spiritual kingdom. In harmony with this it is written by the Prophet David, as addressed to The Christ—"Instead of [being longer considered] thy fathers [they] shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes [chief ones, captains] in all the earth."—Psa. 45:16.

The resurrection of these ancient worthies will also be "better" than that of the remainder of mankind in that they were tried severely during their life and received a "good report through faith," and will have attained the reward of that faithfulness. They will be perfect men, having completely restored to them all that was lost in Adam—mental and moral likeness to God, and perfection of physical powers.

ELEMENTS OF CHARACTER-DEVELOPMENT

If these worthies of the past have had large experience with sin and have proved themselves faithful in that they remained loyal to God, even unto death, why should they not receive life-rights as well as perfection of life at once? Why should they be obliged to wait until the end of the Millennial age for recognition by Jehovah, instead of receiving it at the beginning? The answer is that God has included the whole world in the Mediatorial work of Messiah, as he has included all the church in the preparatory work of the royal priesthood, through the great Advocate, the Redeemer; and the Mediator's work will continue for a thousand years. Hence, all who come under that work will be obliged to wait for the end of that epoch before the recognition of any of them will be effected.

The ancient worthies "had this testimony that they pleased God." They pleased him in that when they ascertained his will they set about doing it, even before he gave it to them as a law, obligation, even before he could ask them to obey him and promise them eternal life for their obedience. Abraham, one of these men, manifested his faith in God although there was no redemption yet accomplished in the world. Christ had not yet come. And although Abraham was not on trial for life or for death, God granted him his favor and declared that he pleased him. He and all those ancient worthies will have this resurrection to human perfection. But since human perfection—to the world of mankind—will come only under the Mediatorial reign of Christ, the ancient worthies cannot be introduced to the Father until the close of the Millennial age.

Hence they will not have life in its fullest sense until the time when at the close of the Millennial age the kingdom shall have been delivered over to the Father. What they will have in the meantime—during the thousand-year period—will be perfection of human nature and all the blessings that God provides for mankind through the great Mediator.

ESTABLISHED CHARACTER NECESSARY

If perfection of organism makes character, then Adam was perfect in this respect. He was created perfect in mind and body. His mind was in the image of God; no blemish was there, no preference for sin, but the reverse of this; he had an appreciation of righteousness and a tendency toward it; he was all that would constitute a good man, for God so made him.

In another sense, Adam never had perfect character; that is, he had no character developed, tested and proved. God tried him, and because of his inexperience he failed, even though his character was good and his organism perfect. He failed in the very first feature of his trial. So we might wonder in what manner the ancient worthies received the testing which would constitute a full proof of character. When we examine the records of these men we find that they manifested great

faith, and that they endured some severe ordeals and testings of their loyalty to God and their confidence in him. It does not surprise us, then, that the testimony that they pleased God was given respecting them. This assures us that they had considerable character development. God must have seen their hearts to be very loyal, else he never would have considered them worthy of a better resurrection. Yet we believe they will have need of further experience and testing.

These ancient worthies will not be begotten of the holy Spirit, as is the church; but we are informed that "after those days" God will "pour his Spirit upon all flesh." (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17.) The ancient worthies lived prior to the time of the outpouring of the holy Spirit, therefore, if they receive any measure of this blessing to come upon "all flesh," it must be in the future, and the giving of the holy Spirit to them will have much to do with fixing, establishing, crystallizing their already perfect characters. They will be brought to greater knowledge, and having already endured severe testings and having proved their thorough heart-loyalty, they will have to learn how to use their talents and powers in fullest conformity to the divine will.

While this class will be mortal and hence, liable to death, it is almost unthinkable that any of these would come short of eternal life. Men who have stood crucial tests under conditions of ignorance and superstition, who have endured temptation from the world, the flesh and the adversary, and proved loyal under such conditions, would, it is only reasonable to suppose, maintain their perfection under the more favorable conditions of the Millennial age.

It is not probable that they would make mistakes; but if, upon their awakening, they should be at once turned over to Jehovah, and, as in Adam's case, the slightest deflection would mean death, we can see that their position would be much less favorable than it will be under the New Covenant arrangement during the Millennial reign of Christ. This is a very gracious arrangement for their best interests, for any possible mistake would be covered by Christ's mediation and not bring them under sentence of death.

The history of some of these ancient worthies is very meager and does not always imply that they were "overcomers" in the sense in which the church is to be. Take, for example, the case of Samson, who is mentioned as one of the ancient worthies. The last we read of Samson, still in the hands of the Philistines, is that he was still loyal to God and prayed for the opportunity of serving God's cause; the Lord granted his prayer, permitting to push down the pillars of the building in which he was making sport for the Philistines; they were the middle pillars upon which the house stood, and in its fall more than three thousand of the enemies of the Israelites were killed along with himself.

Faith seems to have been the chief element of character that was developed under Samson's experiences. We do not know how much patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, gentleness, meekness, etc., were developed in his character; nothing is stated in regard to the matter and we have no reason to suppose that Samson was a very gentle man. Indeed, we have never thought of gentleness and meekness as being amongst his characteristics. The slaying of one thousand men with the jawbone of an ass, as well as other experiences of his, would not seem to indicate this.

We may reasonably suppose, therefore, that although Samson will be brought back in an absolutely perfect condition, and under the favorable environments of the Millennial age, there will probably be experiences in life that he never encountered and that will be so new to him that he might be in danger of making mistakes. Assuredly he will have much to learn respecting the things of the Spirit of God, in the days of the blessing of "all flesh."

Summing up, we would say, the ancient worthies will not come into actual and personal relationship to God, so as to be determined worthy of eternal life, until the completion of the Millennial age, because that age is set apart for the very purpose of determining who of all mankind may have eternal life—aside for the spirit-begotten ones of the present time. At the close of the Millennial age, when all mankind shall have reached perfection of being, they shall be tried of the Father for their worthiness or unworthiness of eternal life—just as Adam, while enjoying perfection, was tested as to whether or not he was worthy to have his life made perpetual.

Since the ancient worthies will be a part of the world under the New Covenant arrangement, it follows that they will not have the decision of the divine court, divine justice, respecting their worthiness of eternal life, until the completion of the Millennial age, until the conclusion of the trial at the end of that age, which will bring to them, as it will bring to all others who are faithful, the great reward of life eternal.

"BROUGHT DOWN TO HELL"

MATT. 11:20-30.—SEPTEMBER 15.

TEXT:—"Come unto me, all that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—V. 28.

Today's study links well with the closing of our lesson of a week ago. We there heard Jesus say that it would be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, in the great judgment day of a thousand years, in which he will reign and give the world a full knowledge of God and a full opportunity of returning to him—more tolerable for the Sodomites than for some who have enjoyed greater privileges and rejected them.

Today's study tells of how our Lord upbraided the city where most of his mighty works had been done, because they repented not, because they did not note the power of God in their midst and gladly receive the message, the indications of divine favor. Such, Jesus declared, will be less prepared to appreciate the kingdom in the future than will some who have never known him. Tyre and Sidon, heathen cities, would have repented with far less preaching. It is but in harmony with divine justice, therefore, that when the great day of God's favor and of the Messianic kingdom shall dawn, the people of Tyre and Sidon shall have things still more favorable than the people of Chorazin and Bethsaida.

Capernaum, above all other cities of Palestine, was favored, because there our Lord did most of his miracles, and uttered more of his wonderful words of life than anywhere else. In this sense of the word Jesus declared that Capernaum had been exalted up to heaven—highly lifted up in point of privilege and divine favor and blessing. This being true, it meant that in justice Capernaum's fall would be proportionate. She would fall from the heights of heavenly privilege and favor down to hell—to the grave.

And today we find it difficult to locate that once great and beautiful city, so thoroughly has it been obliterated, brought down to dust. Harken further to the reason for this denouncement: "If the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day; but I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee."

Let us not mistake the lesson: While only those who fully accept Christ and consecrate their lives to his service will receive the spirit-begetting, or any share in the heavenly kingdom, all the remainder of mankind who come to any knowledge of the Lord of his mercy and blessing, and who refrain from rendering homage and from striving to walk in God's way, will proportionately disadvantage themselves in respect to the future life and the great blessings and privileges and opportunities to be brought to all mankind through Messiah's kingdom and its reign of a thousand years.

"I THANK THEE, O FATHER"

It was in Jesus' day as it has ever since been, that not many of the great or rich or wise or learned had ears to hear the Gospel message. The difficulty with this class is that the things of the present life so fill and satisfy that they have no hungering for the better things. They have their consolation now, they have their pleasures now; they say, Soul, take thine ease now, look out for number one, and do not feel too much interest in or concern for other people and their troubles; there are millions of poor, groaning fellow-creatures, and if you stop to sympathize with them you will mar your own pleasure.

Thus it has been that the majority of the followers of Jesus in every age have been chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith. There are two ways of viewing this matter. On the one hand we can rejoice with the poor and less influential who have received the Gospel message, that doubtless their poverty, etc., were favorable factors to their advantage. And, similarly, we can sympathize with the great and rich and learned, that their earthly blessings are blinding them to the still greater opportunities of this age, so that not many of them will be

of the kingdom class—not many of them members of the bride company, joint-heirs with Jesus in his Messianic kingdom.

But hearken again to the words of Jesus—how peculiarly they read: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." How strangely those words once sounded to us, when we supposed that all who failed to receive the message of Jesus, all who failed to make their "calling and election sure" to membership in the bride class—all such would suffer some kind of an eternal torture!

How strange it seemed that Jesus should thank the Father that these things were hidden from some of the grandest and noblest and most brilliant of our race! We could not understand. But now, how clear! how plain! Jesus was preaching the kingdom, and all who rejected his preaching rejected the kingdom, and will lose it. This does not mean that they may not receive ultimately a blessing under that kingdom, when it shall rule the world, and when all that are in their graves shall come forth to receive those very blessings which Jesus died to procure for them—the blessings of a trial, or judgment of a thousand years, to determine whether they will be accounted worthy of everlasting life, or of everlasting death, destruction.

Now we see what Jesus intimated, namely, that there is a wisdom in God's course in this matter which is not apparent on the surface. Had those rich and great seen fully, distinctly, clearly the true situation, it would have increased their responsibility; their condemnation in not receiving and accepting Christ would have been greater. Besides, some of them, of strong character and determination, might have been impelled thereby to take a course of still more violent opposition than they did take; or, if they had known and seen the truth, it would have made them either opposers or defenders of it. If they had defended Christ, then he would not have been crucified, and the divine plan would not have been carried out; or, if they had intelligently permitted his crucifixion, they would have had a tenfold condemnation. St. Peter declares that the extenuating circumstances connected with our Lord's crucifixion was ignorance. He declared, speaking by inspiration at Pentecost, "If they had known, they would not have crucified the Prince of Life."

FEW KNOW THE FATHER OR THE SON

All men are to be brought to a knowledge of God. The Scriptures declare, "The knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth." Jesus declared that no one can know the Father except as first they come to know the Son, or as the Son reveals the Father to him. Hence those who have failed to recognize Jesus as the Son of God have not yet come to the full appreciation of their privileges. Blessed are our eyes, that now they see, our ears that now they hear, that we may know Messiah, and through him know the Father; and Jesus may come in to us and sup with us, and we with him.—Rev. 3:20.

We are glad that all mankind in due time will be brought to a clear knowledge and full opportunity. But oh, how much greater is our blessing, besides the privilege of now being the sons of God, joint-heirs in his glorious kingdom! We may well rejoice with the Lord in his thanks to the Father, not only that some cannot hear, see, or understand, but also that some of us can hear, see and understand the divine message now, and thus share its blessings.

The special call of God through Jesus, therefore, is to the poor, the broken-hearted, the heavy laden, the unsatisfied: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

PREACHING THE KINGDOM

MATT. 9:35 TO 10:15.—SEPTEMBER 8.

TEXT:—"He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me."—Matt. 10:40.

We have more about the kingdom in the study appointed for today. Not only did Jesus preach the kingdom, as our lesson says, but realizing that the harvest work of the Jewish age was great, he sent forth his twelve apostles two and two—to preach what? Hark! He said, "As you go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

As the Savior cast out devils and healed the sick, not with the view of doing a restitution work and general healing, but to allow the people to hear the message which he preached, and to illustrate the healing and restoring work which his kingdom will do in its appointed time, so also he gave the same power to

his apostles, for the reason that he gave them the same message of the kingdom to proclaim.

He told them that the harvest was plenteous and that the laborers were few, and intimated that it was their privilege to note this fact and to be all the more energetic because of the great "field" and the few to reap it; but in the meantime to "pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth more laborers." That is to say, he wished them to feel a measure of responsibility in the work, even though he himself was the Lord of that harvest, and even though he was the responsible one. So the Master would have every one of us feel a deep interest in the

harvest work now in process, in the end of this age, and similarly to pray him for more laborers, in the similar proclamation, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

These messengers of the kingdom were not to go to the Gentiles, but merely to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," said our Lord. Why? Did he not love the Gentiles. Was the Lord Jesus prejudiced so that he cared only for his own nationality? No; the answer is a different one. God's covenant promised the blessed privilege of the Messiahship to Abraham's seed. Jesus was the seed of Abraham in particular and the Messiah. But God had another feature in mind in connection with that Messiahship, of which Abraham did not know; namely, that he would have associated with Messiah in the kingdom others who would share his glory, honor and immortality. This blessed privilege, which Abraham could not have fully understood, God nevertheless fulfilled to Abraham's children, as fully as though he had particularly stipulated it in the promise. God would keep the very spirit of his engagement as well as its letter. Hence, no favor could go to the Gentiles until after natural Israel had received the opportunity and used it as far as they would.

HARVESTING THEN AND NOW

Another reason why the blessing should not have been given to the Gentiles was that it was to be a harvesting work, and not plowing, harrowing, nor sowing which had not been done with the Gentiles, but only with the Jews. It was appropriate, therefore, that the Harvest, which belonged to the Jews should be confined to them. What was done for the Gentiles was the seed-sowing, as represented in the parable of the Wheat and Tares.

But now we are in the harvest of the Gospel age. It is not the Jews that are being harvested now, nor the heathen, nor the world in general. The reaping is to be done amongst those who have received the seed-sowing—the reaping work belongs to Christendom—to whatever part of mankind the Gospel message has been made known and wherever received and professed. This, therefore, is an intimation to us that the Lord would now have the harvesting done chiefly amongst those who profess to be his people, nominal spiritual Israel. The trumpet is to be blown in Zion, to awaken those who are at ease in Zion.

Jesus specially instructed the reapers of that harvest that they should go forth fully trusting to divine providence. They were not commissioned to beg nor to take up collections, so far as the records show. They assumed therefore that they were merely to accept what might be voluntarily tendered. If they were not hospitably received they were to consider it the Lord's will that they should go elsewhere. They were sent to search out the worthy ones; they should keep this in mind. In going from house to house, a prayer should be in their hearts, if not upon their lips, that if there were worthy ones there the peace of God, and their peace, might be there. If not, they were to take their blessing with them to bestow it upon those more worthy, as they should find them. "Whoever will not receive you and hear your words, when you depart out of that house," or out of that city, "shake off the dust from your feet."

TORONTO AND WASHINGTON CONVENTION

Nearly one thousand of those of "like precious faith" assembled in convention at the National Exhibition Park, Toronto, Ont., Canada, beginning Sunday, June 30. The weather was ideal for such an occasion, and the spirit of the friends indicated their joy in the Lord, their oneness of purpose and implicit faith in the great Creator of the Universe. Those in attendance were mostly from Canada, although quite a number were present from the United States.

Horticultural Hall proved to be a splendid convention auditorium, having a capacity of about fifteen hundred. The friends were quite comfortably lodged in the vicinity of the park, and a substantial luncheon was provided each noon, affording at the same time an excellent opportunity for sociability and Christian fellowship. The Exhibition Park is located on the lake front with a magnificent view of the water, and is artistically laid out with winding paths, fountain sprays and flower beds.

With such beautiful surroundings praise to the Almighty filled every heart from the very first and the opening day of services was appropriately designated "Praise day." The speakers of the day magnified the name of the Lord and forcefully depicted the divine program. "Hope day," "Kingdom day" and "Fruitage day" each in turn proved equally interesting and helpful to the assembled Bible Students as they had

"MORE TOLERABLE FOR SODOM"

Jesus declared that in the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for the city refusing to receive his representatives. What does that mean—"more tolerable?" It implies that the treatment will be tolerable in any event. But why more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah and others in the day of judgment?

It was Jesus' declaration that, aside from a saintly few who received his message gladly, the remainder of the people of that time were more hardened and more blameworthy in God's sight than were the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, whose sin was of a different kind. Let us notice that feature. The sins of Sodom were certainly grievous in the sight of God and all good people. But, think of it! the sin of carelessness in respect to the glorious message of the kingdom is in God's sight an indication of a still meaner condition of heart of a still more wicked person, one of whom there is less hope of an eventual salvation.

The Sodomites mentioned by Jesus were not so illuminated as those living in his day, yet he declares, "Fire rained down from heaven and destroyed them all." (Luke 17:29.) And that took place nearly twenty-five centuries before Jesus' birth, yet he declares that those Sodomites had not up to that time been judged—their judgment was still future; and, "in the day of judgment, it will be more tolerable" for them than the people of Bethsaida and Chorazin. Sodom sinned grievously, but they had little light, practically no knowledge of God.

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

But why should the Sodomites have a day of judgment at all? Were they not judged, condemned and destroyed? Oh, yes; but then, all men, Adam and all of his race, were judged and condemned. Those Sodomites were condemned to death before they were born, as are all of Adam's children—born in sin, "shapen in iniquity." The death penalty which came upon Adam reached to them as it has reached to us. The only thing that came upon the Sodomites specially, in addition to what comes upon all mankind, was that they died violent deaths, probably accompanied by great sufferings.

In this blotting out as a divine punishment, the apostle tells us, they were made an example of the ultimate doom that will come upon all who reject God's grace and die the second death. (2 Pet. 2:6.) However, the Sodomites and all of Adam's posterity are included in the redemption work of Jesus. Hence they are no more dead than Abraham, but merely sleeping with their fathers, as Abraham sleeps with his fathers, waiting the glorious morning, when the Redeemer of Adam and his race shall take to himself his great power, shall establish his kingdom, bind Satan, glorify his church, and begin his work of blessing the world.

The world's blessing will consist of an awakening from the tomb, and there will be an opportunity to the Sodomites, as well as the people in Jesus' day, to rise out of their sinful and fallen condition, and, if they will, to return to full harmony with God and have everlasting life. In that glorious judgment day of a thousand years (2 Pet. 3:7, 8) the Sodomites will find it easier to make progress than will those who repudiated the message of Jesus and the apostles. However fallen and degraded the Sodomites were in some respects, their hearts and consciences were less seared than those who refused God's message.

further word pictures painted before their mental vision illustrating God's wonderful provision for all mankind, and the special favors in reservation for the members of "the church of the first-born."

At one of these sessions a resolution was unanimously adopted expressing the sense of the convention "that we do not find the Bible to teach the doctrines of a literal hell fire, or place of fire and brimstone, for the punishment of the wicked, but that secular history of the formation of the creeds of the Middle ages reveals the fact that for various reasons, either wisely or unwisely, the doctrine of punishment in hell fire was added to the Gospel as taught by Jesus and the twelve apostles. We, therefore, now unreservedly repudiate as thoroughly unscriptural the teaching of a place, state or condition of a literal lake of fire and brimstone for the punishment of the wicked, and further, that we believe from many personal testimonials that the vast majority of ministers of all Protestant denominations have privately repudiated the 'hell fire' theory, but have for supposedly good reasons, hesitated to inform their congregations; and further, that we believe, on this account thousands, and perhaps tens of thousands, are being driven into skepticism or infidelity. We appeal to every minister in the Dominion of Canada to publish in his local newspaper, over his own signature, a statement declaring whether or

not he believes the Bible to teach the doctrine of a literal lake of fire and brimstone, and ask every editor to invite the ministers of his constituency to avail themselves of his columns for their statement."

On Thursday, "Fruition day," Brother Russell arrived in the afternoon and found the convention at its height; and on Friday, "Harvester day," the enthusiasm and zeal seemed, if anything, to excel any former occasion. We trust that many of the harvesters were encouraged to renewed activity in the Lord's service for the ensuing year, and, too, that others may have received an incentive to enter into some department of the grand harvest work. The prevailing sentiment seemed to be expressed in the words of our Master during that other great harvest period eighteen centuries ago—"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest."

Saturday was designated "Spirit Begetting day." At the conclusion of the morning praise and testimony service Brother Russell addressed the convention on "Baptism—Its Import and Its Symbol." This was followed by an immersion service at the lake, where 97 adults symbolized their full consecration unto death. The convention proper, according to program, concluded on Saturday afternoon with a love feast. The elders of the Toronto class, all the pilgrim brethren present, and Brother Russell, enjoyed the blessed privilege of a personal hand-shake with each and all in attendance. The singing of appropriate farewell hymns and the breaking of bread made the scene most impressive, never to be forgotten.

Although not on the program, on Sunday morning a large number of the friends gathered again at Horticultural Hall for a praise and testimony service and an address by one of the Canadian brethren, followed by a Berean lesson. In the afternoon the public of Toronto were addressed by Brother Russell in the Royal Alexandra Theatre on the subject, "Beyond the Grave." The meeting was well advertised, and although this is a large auditorium, and the day was exceedingly warm, the place was crowded to its capacity and, according to various estimates, five hundred to one thousand were turned away from the doors unable to gain admittance. The witness to the truth, God's character and plan thus given, we trust, may serve to awaken the interest of some who heard for the first time. Closest attention was given.

AT WASHINGTON CITY

While the concluding sessions were being held at Toronto, Ontario, Bible Students from thirty-six different States were entering the Capitol City of the United States by the gateway of its magnificent Union Station, previously mentioned in the columns of this journal on account of the appropriate inscriptions of Biblical texts so precious to the hearts of our readers, to be found above the archway entrances, viz., "Thou hast put all things under his feet;" "The truth shall make you free"; "The desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose," etc.

Via special trains, special cars, electric lines and automobiles the friends continued to pour in until by Saturday evening, the day before the convention opened, the city was fairly filled with Bible Students, who were assigned to over six hundred different homes, private boarding house and hotels. This distribution of the visiting Students, we believe, afforded an excellent opportunity for witnessing the truth before many families and persons who might not otherwise have been reached. So far as we have heard all were quite comfortably located.

The opening day's sessions were all held in the auditorium at the Glen Echo Chautauqua Grounds, and in spite of the extreme heat the place was filled to overflowing. Observing the extraordinary numbers in attendance, which more than taxed the capacity of Glen Echo Park and the electric car facilities, the committee on arrangements concluded that it would be best to transfer the majority of the meetings to Washington City proper. Accordingly, on Monday morning the Washington Academy of Music, a fine auditorium with a seating capacity of about 2,500 persons, was secured, and at 9 o'clock on Tuesday morning the same was packed to its limit, with about 300 on the platform. This necessitated the securing of another auditorium for overflow services, which were arranged for in the

beautiful new Masonic Temple, seating about 1,400 people. Besides these two places the G. A. R. Hall was engaged for book stall, colporteur department, postoffice, information bureau and a general meeting place for those who desired to make appointments with one another.

We believe we can see the overruling hand of Providence in having these auditoriums, as they served to bring before the attention of the public the actual size of the gathering of Bible Students. It was a surprise to many of the Washington residents to know that there were so many people so interested in Bible study as not to give their time to sight-seeing or other attractions of that beautiful city, but on the contrary would pour into each of the auditoriums at each session, morning, afternoon and evening, notwithstanding the heated weather.

Besides the regular features, as designated on the program, a reception was held in the G. A. R. Hall on Monday evening, attended by six hundred. Another reception, in the nature of a special discourse by Brother Russell, was held on Tuesday evening in the Academy of Music, which was crowded to its capacity. On Wednesday night a most inspiring prayer meeting, attended by fully 2,500 persons, was conducted at the Academy of Music. The testimonies all evidenced remarkable growth in grace and in knowledge of the Lord and a desire to "praise him for his goodness and wonderful works to the children of men."—Psa. 107:8.

Another feature not on the regular program was the "Christian Workers' Service" on Thursday afternoon at the Glen Echo auditorium, over one thousand being present. The discourse by Brother Russell on the subject of Baptism on Friday morning was listened to with quiet interest, and at its conclusion 167 adults indicated their desire to symbolize their baptism into the body of Christ by water immersion. After directing a few personal words and extending the right-hand of fellowship to each of the candidate, they were conducted to the bathing pool at the foot of the imposing Washington Monument, where the ceremony was performed with befitting dignity and solemnity.

In the evening Brother Russell addressed a splendid assembly of Pilgrims, elders and deacons at the Academy of Music, and all seemed greatly rejoiced, comforted and encouraged by the remarks, which were based upon the text, Acts 20:28.

Harvesters' day, with its usual enthusiasm, brought together the active colporteur workers to learn more about the wonderful privileges of the season in which we are living. The Master's words, as recorded by St. John, seem best to express the sentiments of this blessed day at the convention: "Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal; that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together."—John 4:34-36.

At one of the early sessions of the convention a similar resolution to that passed at the Toronto convention, repudiating the doctrine of the dark ages—the eternal torture of nearly all mankind—was presented and carried unanimously by the Bible Students gathered at Glen Echo. Already we learn of considerable discussion having been agitated amongst the various clergymen in all parts of the country.

Holiness day concluded this last, and we must again say, "the best yet" of all our conventions. On account of the great numbers in attendance the usual custom of breaking bread and shaking hands with all the pilgrims and Brother Russell was not deemed practical, but instead the pilgrim brethren and Brother Russell were stationed at the various points of exit of the Academy of Music and bade the friends farewell while they sang, "Blest Be the Tie That Binds," "God Be With You Till We Meet Again," and other hymns of similar sentiment. As this leave-taking was in progress many eyes glistened with tears of mingled sorrow and joy while we said farewell to one another and "God bless you." Let us hope to meet again in the great convention on high, where we surely shall be if faithful to him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light."

MORE BEREAN QUESTION BOOKLETS

We are pleased to inform our readers that Question Booklets are in stock for Volumes I, II, III, IV, and V, of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, also for TABERNACLE SHADOWS. Price 5c each—50c per dozen, postpaid, brings them within the reach of all. Order freely according to your needs.

Many of the classes find these questions very helpful. The difficulty with many classes in the past has been that not every one has the teaching ability to draw the information of the

lessons from the class. The successful class leader has little to say except as he sums up the answer to each question after it has been discussed by the class; or, if the question be not understood by the class, he may often render assistance by paraphrasing it and, if possible, simplifying it.

Excellent as public preaching is we believe that the Lord's people learn more in Berean classes than by listening to any sermon. Thought is stimulated, quickened.

SCRIPTURAL USAGE OF THE TERM SALVATION

Higher critics and evolutionists have much trouble in their endeavor to hide from the common people the fact that their theories are diametrically opposed to all the teachings of the Scriptures respecting human salvation. These latter-day philosophers do not like to be called "infidels" "unbelievers," but prefer to take their texts from the Bible in their weekly endeavor to undermine faith. If evolution theories were true, the word "salvation" would be wholly inappropriate. If mankind have been climbing upward for six thousand years, out of monkeyhood into perfect manhood, and if they are gradually to become angels by processes of evolution, then the word "salvation" is altogether out of place when applied to them. They should rather be let alone in their glorious upward progress. They would need no Savior, or Redeemer; for according to this theory, mankind never was lost—never fell from perfection.

But the Bible proposition is the very reverse of the evolution theory. The Scriptures teaches that man was created perfect and holy, in the moral likeness of his Maker. It declares that when on trial to determine whether or not his life and favors might be continued to him everlastingly, Adam sinned and was sentenced to death. It tells that through Jesus, God has made a provision for the recovery of mankind out of the sin and death condition into which he fell; that the work of Jesus primarily is that of the satisfaction of justice; that he died, the just for the unjust, and that sinners are to be reconciled to God through the death of his Son. The Bible teaches that this redemptive process, this salvation of mankind from sin and death, has already begun in that Christ has already given his life a ransom-price, and has been exalted and declared to be the Savior, the Life-giver of the world.

But the world has not yet been saved. It lies in the wicked one. Satan is still the "prince of this world." Sin and death reign. The world has only the divine promise which was given to Abraham, but of which the majority of mankind do not even know. That promise, however, is sure—that eventually all the families of the earth shall be blessed by Messiah; and that to effect this salvation Messiah in due time will set up a glorious reign of righteousness, the kingdom of God under the whole heavens. It shall rule; it shall conquer; it shall destroy sin, death and everything opposed to divine righteousness and

to the best interests of mankind. Thus eventually the knowledge of the Lord shall be made to fill the whole earth (Isa. 11:9), and every knee shall bow and every tongue confess the Lord. (Isa. 45:23.) Thus shall come the glorious opportunity for salvation through the knowledge of the Lord, and his will.—Jer. 31:34.

Those who desire to do God's will shall be assisted by the Redeemer, thus to cultivate a righteous character. That assistance will include an uplifting out of, or saving from, sin and death and all the terrible associations of mental, moral and physical imperfections. That salvation will be to life, health and strength—mental, moral and physical. The earth also shall be saved—recovered from the divine sentence, or "curse." No longer will thorns and thistles cause sweat of face; but the earth shall yield her increase and be styled, "The garden of the Lord." (Zech. 8:12; Isa. 51:3.) The earth is God's footstool, which he will make glorious.—Isa 60:13.

But that salvation of man and of his earthly home and future dominion is preceded by another phase, or kind, of salvation. Before dealing with the world, God elects, calls, draws, instructs a saintly class. These by faith may now speak of themselves as saved, although their salvation will not really be accomplished until they share in the first resurrection. Now they reckon themselves as passed from death unto life, as new creatures, brethren of Christ, children of God. Into all this glorious condition the saintly ones will enter with their resurrection change, experiencing a transfer from human nature and conditions to spirit (heavenly) nature and conditions.

Thus, eventually, there will be two classes of saved ones—two classes saved out of the sin and death conditions which now prevail:

(1) The church changed from earthly to divine nature.—1 Cor. 15:51-54.

(2) The willing and obedient of the world, who, during the thousand years of Messiah's glorious reign, will be gradually changed, not to a different nature, but from the imperfection to the perfection of human nature.—Acts. 3:19-21.

Meantime all the wilfully wicked, disobedient or rebellious will be utterly destroyed in the "second death," "as natural brute beasts."—2 Pet. 2:12.

SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS RE THE REDEEMER

Question (1) At what period in Jesus' life was he a perfect man?

Answer.—He was always perfect, but did not become the perfect man until the 30th year of his life. In the very beginning, "the beginning of the creation of God" (Rev. 3:14), he was sinless, perfect on the spirit plane—next to the heavenly Father. When he humbled himself, in harmony with the divine plan and in order that he might be man's Redeemer and Restorer, he still maintained his perfection, his sinlessness. When born of the virgin, he was still "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." He was the perfect babe. As he grew to manhood his perfection was maintained—he was the perfect boy, the perfect youth and finally the perfect man. Thus we read, "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man."

Question (2) Was Jesus, at the time of attaining the perfection of manhood, possessed of everlasting life, or was it necessary for him to be placed on trial as a perfect man before he would be accounted worthy of everlasting life?

Answer.—According to the divine law, under which Jesus was born into the world, his perfection proved his worthiness of everlasting life, just as Adam's perfection meant everlasting life to him. But as Adam, who when created was in covenant relationship with God, by disobedience, by breaking the covenant, lost the right to life which was his by that divine covenant, so Jesus, as a perfect man, was in covenant-relationship with God, and as a human being could have forfeited his right to life only by sin or, otherwise, have disposed of it by sacrifice—the latter of which he did.

Question (3) Was Jesus at the age of thirty years qualified to give himself a ransom-price for Adam and his race, or was it necessary that first he should have a personal trial, or testing, in respect to his loyalty to God before his sacrifice could be accepted as the ransom-price for Adam and his race?

Answer.—Jesus was at thirty years of age qualified and competent to present his body a "living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God," as man's ransom-price—and this he did. God accepted the offering and sacrifice and signified his acceptance of it by the anointing of the holy Spirit, by which he begat Jesus again, this time to the divine nature as a reward for the obedient sacrifice of that which he had consecrated unto death.

Nevertheless, the necessity for a testing of one who would become man's substitute was not overlooked in the divine arrangement. Two tests, or trials, proceeded at the same time, and both were necessary. As a man he must prove loyal to the principles of righteousness represented in the divine law, otherwise he could not be a suitable substitute or ransom for Adam and his family. On his own account, to prove himself worthy of the divine nature, Jesus needed to have trials as a new creature. His begetting of the holy spirit could reach the fruition of divine nature only by his faithfully carrying out his covenant or sacrifice. Hence, if he had failed to perform the sacrifice as he covenanted, he would have failed entirely, and would not have received the great reward of divine glory, honor and immortality which came to him in his resurrection.

St. Paul declares, "Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." (Phil. 2:9) The entire test of our Lord Jesus was along the lines of his faithfully sacrificing himself, in the doing of the Father's will—in submitting to all things "written in the Book"—in the prophecies and in the types of the law. Had he failed to keep his covenant of sacrifice, not only would he have failed to gain the exaltation to divine nature, but he would have lost everything—even life itself.

But the keeping of his covenant of sacrifice, obligatory upon our Lord as a new creature, meant also that he kept the law, obligatory upon him as a human being because the things required of him under his covenant were in harmony with the law. To keep his covenant meant that he should keep the law, and much more than that—to sacrifice his rights and interests which the law did not demand should be sacrificed.

Question (4)—If Jesus had kept the law blamelessly, yet had failed in some feature of his covenant of sacrifice, what would have been the status of human redemption? Would the ransom-price of humanity have been paid by Jesus' keeping the law perfectly, even though he had failed in obedience to his covenant of sacrifice, and thus failed to attain to glory, honor and immortality—the divine plane? If not, why not?

Answer.—Under the circumstances mentioned in the above question, the entire matter of redemption would have failed, so far as Jesus was concerned. His death would not have ransomed man from the death penalty. Indeed, the question presupposes an entirely wrong view of the ransom. Jesus' death

was a ransom-sacrifice. That is to say it was a sacrificial death intended to effect the ransom of Adam and all lost through his disobedience. But a ransom sacrifice is one thing, and the payment of the ransom-price is quite another thing. For instance: Jesus did his work perfectly; it had the divine approval; the ransom-price was laid down and was satisfactory to the Father, and Jesus has been rewarded for his loyalty and obedience manifested in that ransom-sacrifice; but the value of that sacrifice, quite sufficient to be the off-set, or satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world, has not yet been applied.

The merit of that sacrifice is in the hands of divine justice, subject to application for the sins of the whole world as soon as God's time shall have arrived. But that time has not quite yet arrived, and the world is still not redeemed, even in a judicial sense. Hence we read, "The whole world lieth in wickedness" and are all "children of wrath." (1 John 5:19; Eph. 2:3.) If the ransom-price had been applied and accepted, the world would not lie in the hands of the wicked one, and would no longer be "children of wrath."

Before the merit of Jesus' sacrifice can be applied as a ransom-price for the world's sins—to secure the world's release from divine condemnation, and the turning over of the world to Jesus and the establishment of his kingdom for its blessing—before all these things, or any of them can take place, another matter must, according to the divine program, be attended to. That other matter is the calling and acceptance and begetting to the divine nature of an elect "church of the first-born, which are written in heaven." (Heb. 12:23.) This is the work which has been in progress for nearly nineteen centuries. As soon as it shall have been completed the glorious Redeemer with his exalted bride class will inaugurate his glorious reign of a thousand years, by binding Satan and ushering in the new dispensation, for which the whole groaning creation has so long waited.—Rom. 8:22, 19.

Thus it will be seen that our Lord's testing, which began at Jordan at the time of his consecration and which ended at Calvary, was two fold, and the two trials progressed simultaneously, and to have failed in either particular would have lost all. As a man from the human standpoint, born under the law, he was obligated to keep the law in every particular. To have failed would have been death. As a new creature, who had entered into a covenant of sacrifice, our Lord was obligated to sacrifice willingly and obediently, his life, his rights, everything that he possessed, in harmony with the overrulings of divine providence. "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" (John 18:11) To have failed of the full, complete sacrifice would have cost him everything, and he would have accomplished nothing by all his previous experiences and loyalty.

Our Lord's faithfulness in sacrificing during the three and a half years of his ministry added nothing whatever to the perfection which he had at Jordan. He was perfect and an acceptable sacrifice to begin with, and he merely maintained that perfection and that acceptance with the Father "faithful unto death." Wherefore he has attained his present exaltation and is in readiness to be the world's merciful and faithful High Priest, and he also has the merit of his sacrifice in the hands of justice ready at the appropriate time in the end of this age to be applied for the cancellation of the sins of the whole world.

The church shares in the benefits of our Lord's death in a different way from that of the world. She has her Redeemer's merit imputed to her by (because of) faith—to cover the weaknesses and blemishes of her flesh, so that her flesh may be presented holy and acceptable to the Father by the Redeemer, who imputes the merit of his sacrifice to it and makes it acceptable as a part of his own sacrifice. "For if we suffer (with him) we shall also reign with him"; "If so be that we suffer

with him, that we may be also glorified together"; "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, your reasonable service"; "Fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." (2 Tim. 2:12; Rom. 8:17; 12:1; Col. 1:24.) These are some of the invitations offered to the church who are now qualifying to be members of the royal priesthood in the great work of blessing and uplifting mankind as God has foreordained and promised.

AN INTERPOLATED TEXT

Question.—Kindly explain Rev. 20:5: "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished."

Answer.—Scholars are agreed that this text is an interpolation. We must remember, however, that it is one thing to be legally, or officially dead, and another thing to be actually dead. But as Jesus said to some, he recognized as alive only those who accepted him. Those who had not the Son had not life in any sense or decree; those who had the Son, have the beginning of life reckoned to them. The world, however, during the thousand years will have opportunity, not only of being awakened, but of having fullness of life. If, therefore, after they are awakened, they will go on and render obedience to the laws of the kingdom, they will be lifted up, up, up out of death to perfection and life.

BIBLE QUESTIONS A MINISTER'S GREATEST TROUBLES

Question.—If the Bible has been misinterpreted on many vital points, how are we to understand the Bible, if we are not educated enough to know these things?

Answers.—Ministers are less able to interpret the Bible than any other class of people in the world. The Theological Seminaries do not teach Bible interpretation, but instruct the student how to defend the various creeds, and how to choke off investigation, and to make the investigator feel foolish. Nothing troubles a minister more than Bible questions.

Our advice to those who want to know the truth is to search the Scriptures and use Concordances and every Bible help that will assist them in a proper and rational understanding of the Scriptures. But be sure that the subject is approached honestly and prayerfully, with a desire to know the truth and without sectarian prejudices. Remember the words of the Master, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth."

THE GREAT TEACHER EXPOSED SADDUCEES' IGNORANCE

Question.—"Whose wife shall she be in the resurrection," who had several husbands?

Answer.—The Sadducees, the agnostics who did not believe in the resurrection, tried to entrap the great Teacher by asking one of their stock questions. Seven different brothers in turn married the same woman and all died before she did. "To which of them shall she be wife in the resurrection?" They did not ask, "To which of these will she be wife in heaven or purgatory or eternal torture?" for neither Jesus nor the Jews held any such teaching. The Pharisees and Jesus taught the resurrection of the dead; and it was against this teaching that the Sadducees aimed their sarcastic question.

Note the majesty of the Master's answer: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, neither the power of God!" (Matt. 22:23-33) You do not understand the Scripture teaching respecting such questions, and you ignore in your question the great divine power which, at the resurrection time, will be exercised to straighten out all the difficulties of the situation. Then the great Teacher proceeded to inform them that such as would (gradually) attain to the resurrection—such as would get a complete raising up out of sin and death, would "neither marry nor be given in marriage," but would be sexless, as are the angels. Thus the supposedly unanswerable question of the Sadducees fell flat, and their ignorance was exposed.

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