

ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.—2 Tim. 2:15.

There is much significance in that word "*study*"; and only the studious find the narrow way to the divine approval and acceptance. *Study* to show thyself approved—study the doctrine; study your course of conduct, to keep it in harmony with the doctrine. Study how to promote the peace and prosperity of Zion, and how to shield yourself and others from the missiles of error and from the poison of an evil, worldly spirit. Study to perform the duties of a faithful soldier of the cross—the seemingly insignificant, as well as the bravest and noblest deeds. A soldier has many seemingly trivial duties to perform, and he is as really doing his duty as a soldier when he is polishing his armor, foraging, cooking his meal, cleaning camp, clearing the way or building bridges for the army to pass as when he is fighting the enemy. All such necessary incidental work is entirely compatible with his commission as a soldier, and is not to be considered "entanglements" or hindrances. And these things cannot be avoided or carelessly done without a measure of unfaithfulness.

So with the Christian soldier. The routine of life, housework, daily toil, any and everything incidental to a proper and honest provision of "*things needful*" for ourselves and those dependent on us for support, as well as provision for the prosecution and care of the Lord's work,—all this is a proper part of our engagement as soldiers of the Lord. The Apostle Peter was as truly serving the Lord when catching the fish from whose mouth he got the coin wherewith to pay the Lord's taxes and his own, as when proclaiming, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. The Apostle Paul was as truly a soldier of the cross and doing his proper work as such when making tents (rather than be chargeable to any) as when, at Mars hill, he preached Jesus and the resurrection. *Whatever* is done with a view to the glory of our Lord, the Captain of our salvation, or for the benefit of any of our fellow-soldiers, or for our own preparation for this warfare, or in the discharge of obligations which our Captain has recognized and approved,

—this is proper work for us as soldiers, and not *entanglement* in the affairs of this life.

But the Christian soldier must study to perform even the commonest duties in a manner creditable to his calling. Nor must he permit himself to become entangled with other things which do not relate to his duties as a soldier, and thus to be side-tracked. For instance, if a soldier knowing how to repair watches were to divert his attention from his regular duties, neglect his camp and battle duties, and the commands of his Captain and the proper work of a soldier to acquire some extra compensation by this means, he would be an unfaithful soldier. And so the Christian who turns aside to seek some *personal*, temporal advantage, to the detriment of his duties as a soldier, is likewise, to some extent, an unfaithful soldier and likely to be drawn out of the ranks entirely.

Study to show thyself approved. Study the Word. Study yourself that you may become well acquainted with yourself—that you may know your talents for service and in what direction they lie, and your weak points and how they may be guarded against; that you may know both your abilities and your shortcomings. Then study to avoid error and to shun all foolish questions and profane and vain babblings. Remember that only the foundation of God standeth sure, and that all other foundations are worthless and all other theories must come to naught. But "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."—2 Tim 2:19.

And if any man desire honor from God, let him not fail to seek it in God's appointed way—along the pathway of humility; for the Lord giveth his favors to the humble. If you would be a vessel fit for the Master's use and a vessel of honor, humble yourself under the mighty hand of God and he will exalt you in due time. Do not be in a hurry about it either; but whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, beginning and ever continuing to cleanse your earthen vessel, that it may be fit for the Master's use.

## LETTERS OF INTEREST

DEAR BROTHER:

I drop you a line to inform you that Pilgrim Brother Hay has been here and has done us all good. We held two meetings, one a Bible study and the other a sermon on the resurrection, both of which were instructive and edifying. The meetings were held in the house I occupy. I presume Brother Hay has written you telling you of our meeting.

At present and for the last couple of weeks two Colporteurs are in Belfast canvassing for the *Dawns*. They report having made satisfactory progress thus far. I do hope they will be successful in finding quite a number of hearing ears. We meet at my home on Sundays, and spend our time in praise, prayer and searching of the Scriptures, thus confirming our faith in the good things of the kingdom.

I am hoping and trusting that before long others will come into the light of the truth and rejoice with us.

I have received the New Bible cuts or pictures for which I thank you, I did not expect any such addition. The Bible is proving very helpful and I prize it more every day. The friends in the truth here all desire to be remembered to you in warmest regards.

I am still rejoicing in the love of God and trying day by day to keep in the race toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Your Brother in Christ,

JAMES BRIGHT,—Ireland.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:

I have just returned from a two weeks' trip to Dublin, Belfast, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Middlesboro and Leeds, and last Sunday, London. In every place I met with the same loving feelings of gratitude to God for present truth, and of appreciation of your loving service to the church. Every church sends you loving greetings, and the assurance that they hope the Lord's providences will permit your visiting this side some day. As I told you once before, so I repeat it that I believe nobody on earth has so many people who love them as yourself, and I voice the expression of all the churches here in my own feelings of gratitude to yourself for your labors for us all. God bless you Brother Russell, and may you to its completeness realize the meaning of those words, "For as much as ye have done it to the least of one of these my brethren ye have done it unto me."

I never met with such a reception in my life as the Glasgow Church gave me—15 of them at the station to greet me, and in every hand a "*Watch Tower*." It is very hard to leave the churches here. My meetings ranged in size from 3 at Middlesboro to 200 at Glasgow. It seems to me that there is a wonderful work going on here. The "wheat" seems coming out far faster than on the American side. I could have found many more little groups to visit had I had the time.

With loving regards to yourself and all the Allegheny household,

Your Brother in Christ,

W. HOPE HAY,—England.

## VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

### INSANITY OF THE DOUKHOBOERS

Various are the forms of insanity or mental unbalance. The whole world of mankind is mentally unbalanced some to one degree some to another degree, as the result of original sin and its death sentence which assails all the energies—mental and moral as well as physical. All are not wicked to the same degree or in the same manner. Some are insanely jealous, some insanely cruel, some insanely covetous or selfish, and the Doukhobors furnish an illustration of insane unselfishness. The lesson is that none of us have good sense enough to direct our own courses. All need the divine aid

provided for us in the Word of God. Those who do accept this divine guidance by full consecration and submission to the holy spirit are Scripturally said to possess "the spirit of a sound mind," and to be "wise" with a wisdom which cometh from above.

It will be remembered that about three years ago the public press gave detailed accounts of the arrival in Canada of about 4,000 Russian peasants styled Doukhobors, who were emigrating on account of their religious convictions—refusal to serve in the Russian army, etc., etc. Next we learned that they were in conflict with Canadian marriage laws because

averse to perpetual marriage obligations and ceremonies. Now we learn that their false conceptions of liberty have taken a new form and that they have concluded that *it is not right* to deprive horses and cattle of *their liberty*, making them servants and menial slaves. In consequence their fields are idle and their good harvests unreaped while their horses and cattle disport themselves at liberty. Consequently many are likely to die of privation during the approaching winter. Truly conscience is a dangerous thing unless instructed by God's Word and thus guided by the spirit of a sound mind. Concerning these people and their troubles we give some extracts below.

The Boston *Transcript* remarks that it is "a religious mania, the like of which has perhaps never been seen in this country," and continues:—

"Fully four thousand Doukhobors, who settled in the Yorkton district, Northwest Territory, will starve or freeze to death, or be on the verge of starvation this year, if the Dominion Government does not take active steps to prevent their present religious mania from going further. . . . Nearly every one of the Doukhobors seen was clad in the lightest of cotton garments. They would afford no protection from an October breeze to say nothing of a severe winter blast; and they say they will wear no other. In many of the houses visited a bag of flour was the only food visible. The Doukhobors will eat a few vegetables; but in few instances had they even brought them into their homes. Men originally strong were gaunt, hungry wrecks; and on a recent trip into Yorkton for flour a dozen big men, harnessed like mules to a heavy wagon, almost fell by the roadside through exhaustion and starvation. The women, so far, have escaped any of the work that must fall on the men since they have discarded the use of animals; but, if this year's crop is to be harvested, they will soon have to harness themselves up to the heavy wagons as the men do. They have made absolutely no provision for the future; and, what is perhaps worse, the religious mania that possesses them is becoming more intense and is spreading. The attempt by the Dominion Government to help these people has apparently had no effect. How it will end will probably be told when the intense cold of that district sets in."

The London *Morning Journal* says of this matter:—

"These 'manias' are apparently simply a gentle Christian sect who have been suddenly seized with the question which Buddhists answered trenchantly enough many a century ago. Asking themselves by what right they dared to exploit any living and sentient creature with capacities of pleasure and independence as great as their own, they became strict vegetarians. But the Russian idealist is capable of a fierce consistency. Be he tyrant or nihilist, Tolstoyan or Doukhobor, he makes no pact with ideas. Having ceased to slay animals for food, the Doukhobors could find no sanction for subjecting them to the servitude and mutilation of the farm-yard. They released their horses and cattle, renounced eggs and milk, wool and leather, and now they are attempting to live on bread and water—clad, we suppose, in cotton. It is a hardy enterprise, but, unless indeed, like Pythagoras, they have scruples about beans, there is no reason why they should fare worse than the millions of good Buddhists who even strain water lest there should be life in it."

Quite true, millions of Buddhists died in the recent famine in India, refusing to eat animal food—the animals starving also. We regret to note a similar delusion and false conception of holiness creeping in amongst "*Vegetarians*";—a disposition to consider the eating of meat "unclean" and "unholy"; a disposition to consider themselves superior to meat-eaters, and to despise them;—to call them "cannibalistic," etc. We offer no objection to those who claim that they have better health as a result of a purely vegetable diet; it is every man's duty to supply to his system the diet which will in his judgment yield the largest degree of comfort and efficiency in his case. But we do object to the claim of special sanctity and acceptableness with God on account of a purely vegetable diet. Those who take that position are distinctly setting themselves up as wiser than God, and holier than our Lord Jesus who not only ate animal food (lamb and fish at least) but who miraculously created fish for food. (John 6:11; 21:6-11) The inspired Apostle "bound" the question and settled it (Matt. 16:19; 18:18; Acts 15:28, 29): the Apostle Paul declaring: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; . . . forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats which God created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth." (1 Tim. 4:1-4) Realizing man's natural unsoundness of judgment, Christians should "not lean to their own under-

standing" but should seek the wisdom of God, and nowhere is this wisdom better illustrated than in him who was "holy, harmless and separate from sinners." Whatever our Master did and taught it would be blasphemy for us as his disciples to call wrong or sinful for us or for others.

M. A. St. John, an Englishman who became converted to Tolstoyan philosophy instead of Christianity, and who recently visited America in the interest of the Doukhobors, gives his views of their present craze in the "*Midland Herald*" (England) as follows:—

"The time of emigration, of change of circumstances, of unsettlement and resettlement, proved to be a perhaps severer strain on the character of these peasants than all their sufferings in the Caucasus and Siberia. They were worn out to some extent, I think, in body and spirit, and they came into circumstances where the work was new to them, and they came into an atmosphere—well, perhaps where a little materialism prevailed. At one time some of them seemed lazy and unreliable—and then some of them seemed to become demoralized and materialized. There were cases of quarreling and fault-finding here and there. The leading men were mostly in Siberia. The state of affairs was lamented. 'I don't know what has come over our people. They are quite changed. If only we had our Siberian exiles here; then it would be quite different.' This is the sort of thing I heard occasionally. Many were sad and ashamed.

"But the old spirit was there still. And now it has revived, I think. And I suppose that, in reaction from the period of materialism, has come a time of heightened spirituality (what shall we call it?) Some have gone to great extremes. One letter told me of a man who had fasted thirty-six days, and was not expected to live. But for the most part it has been evident from their letters that they have been for some time quietly and carefully thinking out the problems of living in their present surroundings while fulfilling the highest demands of conscience. Thus, tho some feel inclined to give up milk and butter, yet they do not want their children and old and sick folk to suffer in consequence. And while they feel compunction in making animals work for them, those same animals whom they can see enjoying so immensely the free life on the prairie, yet they do not wish to sell them to others, nor by giving up old habits too suddenly, or too wholesale, to entail suffering on the weak, or unpreparedness for emergency.

"What I want to impress upon people here is that these are—a great many of them at least—thinking peasantry. They are not all the same. This is one of the points in which I am so proud of them. They have their conservative old stagers and their moderates and their progressives. They have their formalists and the broad freethinkers. And they are human, oh, so human! Of course the Canadians don't understand them. But if the Canadian Government goes on with the kind and sympathetic forbearance that it has hitherto pursued, and if we will wait and watch what comes of it all, we may learn a lot."

"Let your moderation be known unto all men," says the Apostle. A live conscience needs to be "taught of God" in order that moderation and not mental unbalance shall result. The truth in its purity will seem erratic enough to worldly people who cannot comprehend it, and every other peculiarity should be carefully avoided. Conscientious blunders are amongst the most injurious. Note the mistaken conscientious conviction of Saul of Tarsus that he ought to persecute Christians. Note also the claim of Seventh Day Adventists that they *must work* on the first day of the week if they would have divine approval and everlasting life. As an illustration of a misguided conscience and its baneful effect in social affairs we mention the case of an editor's wife. She at one time took pleasure in assisting him in his work. By and by a deluded and misguided conscience told her that God wished her to be editor in chief and publish what she pleased. When the editor demurred that he dare not abandon his stewardship, the deluded conscience told its owner that she should no longer co-operate, but more, that she should break her marriage covenant in deserting her husband and home, and that she should say all manner of evil against him, falsely, until such time as he would yield to her the liberties of the journal—which her conscience told her was God's will.

The moral of all such lessons is, "Be not wise above what is written." "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,—rightly dividing the Word of truth."

#### "AWAY FROM ROME" MOVEMENT IN ENGLAND

The *Fortnightly Review* contains an article from the pen of Rev. Arthur Galton, a clergyman of the church of England, who formerly went over to the Roman Catholic communion

but returned. Rev. Galton in serious vein declares "that he has been made the spokesman for one hundred and fifty secular clergymen" of the Roman Catholic church, pledged "to work jointly as a corporate body, by constitutional means and through canonical methods, for the reformation they desire" in the Roman Catholic church and its "unlawful authority." He declares: "It is obvious to everyone who studies history with an impartial mind, that the English people and the Roman court are incompatible," and adds:—

"Between the Norman conquest and the middle of the fourteenth century, when our rulers generally were strong, when our sense of a national and an independent life was growing, that incompatibility and the friction caused by it are manifest in contemporary annals. The grievances then complained of were dealt with by legislation in the century that followed. These grievances, to sum up shortly, were all attributed to the misgovernment, the cupidity, and the ever-growing usurpations of the Roman court. Some of our forefathers entered the Christian church with a grateful and generous devotion for the Roman bishops, which continued until their sentimental affection was destroyed by the scandalous reality. Their practical experience of the methods and officials of the Roman court forced them to repudiate its authority, for political, financial and ethical reasons. In spirit, in aims, in methods and institutions, the English people and that narrow oligarchy of Italians, which pretends to be the Catholic church, are by their respective qualities necessarily opposed to one another. Religious questions enter much less into the mutual estrangement between Rome and England than most theological controversialists imagine. Numerous and flagrant individual cases, as well as the general effects of the Roman system in political and ecclesiastical affairs, must compel serious thinkers to ask themselves whether the Papal Government, as such, has any religion at all, except in phrases; or whether it can have had any as a corporate institution, since the pontificate of Nicholas the First. The most prominent and abiding impression conveyed by the papacy, since the ninth century, is that it has been a political and financial organization masquerading in a theological disguise for the attainment of temporal domination."

"The writer and his friends see no hope of a reform by any ordinary means. Their plan is to combine, and to act together. They do not wish to make a new sect, nor do they wish to be merged into the Church of England. They intend to set up a bishop of their own, the validity of whose orders cannot be challenged by the papal theologians, or doubted by any Catholic. They wish to work still among and for their own people. The details for this are all arranged. For the lawfulness of this course, they appeal to ancient precedent and to the regulations of canon law. It is admitted, as they argue, that in a case of necessity, if lawful requests be denied by the existing authorities, the sufferers may provide an alternative authority for themselves. Few people, who know and face the facts, can deny the existence of grave abuses, which are a danger to faith and morals, as well as a violation of constitutional and canon law. Few, probably, can say with any truth that they expect a reformation by ordinary means, and through the Curia. The utterance of the Pope, the declared policy of his advisers, the growth of the religious orders, the whole condition of affairs in the Papal church, proclaim surely a state of necessity. This of itself clears the reforming movement from that charge of schism to which it might be liable in ordinary times. These reformers look upon themselves as Englishmen by inheritance and birth, but not quite as Englishmen in church affairs. Their attitude, both with regard to Rome and Canterbury, is similar to that of certain communities in early days who were allowed, without any taint of heresy or schism, to be ministered to by their own bishop, and not by the local bishops where they happen to reside. These reformers, then, propose to establish a subsidiary or strangers' bishop. They mean to repudiate the jurisdiction of bishops who are merely delegates and nominees of the Roman court. By severing themselves from the abuses and the usurped authority of that mundane organization, they do not abdicate their rights in the Catholic church, they do not give up their reverence for the lawful and primatial authority of the Roman bishops, nor do they forget the precedence which is due by right to the historical position and the long services of their venerable See. If the papacy will only accept an unreasonable

service, and continue to assert an unlawful authority, the charges of heresy and schism recoil of necessity upon itself. The position of these new reformers, with regard to Rome, is precisely the position and attitude of our own reformers in the sixteenth century."

"The reformers, for whom this article is written, have no drawing toward these neo-Anglicans, whom they consider more Romanized and narrow than the Romans. They bid them remember the position, the traditions, and the history of the English church which they appear so strangely to have sophisticated or forgotten. They implore them to realize that the existing Curia may be broken to pieces, or may be broken away from lawfully, but it will never yield to persuasion, or grant any constitutional reform. Those who know it are compelled to give up all hope of reformation and reunion by means of it. Those who have only a theoretical imagination of it, who dream about it as an ideal, are surely ill-advised and worse, not to profit by the experiences and warnings of those who knew it only too well through its mundane, arbitrary, scheming, and un-English administration."

#### JEWISH WOES IN ROUMANIA

"It is the time of Jacob's trouble," as the prophets foretold. The poor Jews are subjected to tribulations in one country after another by so-called Christians who are totally ignorant of real Christianity. Now it is Roumania that persecutes, and all right-minded people are pleased to note that Mr. Hay, U. S. Secretary of State, has addressed a communication to the great powers of Europe calling attention to the fact that the "Berlin Conference" of European Powers (1878) created Roumania a separate State upon condition that its laws should maintain religious liberty, and that this arrangement is being violated. Whether the appeal will bear any fruit is doubtful; but it can surely do no harm to thus lift up a voice for Justice.

Concerning the persecutions the *Roumanian Bulletin* (London) says:—

"These conditions of life, humiliating tho they be, would not in themselves have sufficed to render the lot of the Roumanian Jews desperate, for it is conceivable that even without civil rights and opportunities of culture human beings may still manage to live with some degree of comfort. It soon became clear to the Roumanian Government, however, that a large and increasing unassimilated element in the country would inevitably lead to serious social and economic complications, and accordingly measures were taken to guard against this fresh danger. These measures have had for their object the increase of misery and of the difficulties of life among the Jews, with the ultimate view of keeping their numbers stationary.

"In pursuance of this terrible policy, almost every form of Jewish economic activity has been the subject of restrictive legislation aimed ostensibly at aliens in general, but in reality affecting only the Jews. They have been expelled from the revenue service, the tobacco regime, and the railway organization. They are excluded from government tenders and contracts. They are placed at the mercy of their Christian competitors in trade, who alone are allowed to be members of chambers of commerce. Their participation in the management of financial corporations and joint-stock companies is severely limited. They may not act as brokers in any trade, and they and their agents are excluded from grain and cattle markets. Their expulsion from the drink traffic has ruined thousands of them. It is calculated that 20,000 were reduced to beggary by the law of 1884, which prohibited them from trading as pedlars."

The Roumanian government evidently desires to force the Jews to emigrate, and the Jews are doing so as rapidly as possible. On this point the *Spectator* (London) says:—

"They wish to reach America, but the Americans will not receive them unless they can prove that they are not paupers; and as they are two hundred thousand in number, the collection of the necessary funds is a work of difficulty and time. In Roumania they have absolutely no rights, and live at the mercy of a population which hates them to such a degree that their parliament has declared all Jews to be foreigners, altho they have been resident for centuries. Neither Germany nor Austria will do anything for them, and it seems impossible for Western Europe, which is more tolerant, either to protect them or to find them a new habitat."

## OUR GENERAL CONVENTIONS

Our two annual conventions (one at Des Moines, Iowa, the other at Washington, D. C.) belong to the past. The first, held September 13-15, served a large western district,

and was attended chiefly by friends residing in Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Arkansas and Texas,—the attendance at the largest session be-

ing about 350. The interest of those present was both deep and fervent, as attested both by words and looks. God's blessing was with us, our cup of joy and sympathy ran over, and we trust continued to do so after our return to our homes, so that the convention's joys and blessings reached and is still refreshing many times the number privileged to be in attendance. Thirty symbolized their consecration by water immersion. The convention was addressed by a large number of speakers, of one heart and one mind. The Christian church kindly put its meeting house at our disposal on the entire day of the baptism service, which was preceded by a discourse explanatory of its deep import from our standpoint.

Each convention seems better than the one previous, which at the time seemed so full of divine favor as to leave nothing to be desired. The last convention, at Washington, was no exception to the general rule in this respect: it was the largest we have ever had in point of numbers, and, so far as we were able to judge, a fuller measure of the holy spirit could not be looked for ever, in the earthen vessels. Over 800 attended;—about 550 to 600 of these being from abroad—from Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama, Illinois, Kansas, California, Georgia, North and South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Ontario.

The Calvary Baptist Church edifice of Washington was kindly put at our disposal for a discourse on baptism, which was followed by the immersion of 45 sisters and 42 brothers, amongst the latter being five formerly ministers, one Methodist, one a Second Adventist and three Baptists. Two of the latter remarked that they had immersed many without understanding the true significance of the ceremony or of the command back of it.

Like the Des Moines Convention, this one concluded with a

love feast—though truth to tell the sessions throughout were love feasts with the Lord through his word and spirit and in prayer and praise. The "pilgrim" brethren, supported by the elders of the local congregation, and by the colporteurs to the number of about thirty, bade goodby to the convention visitors in general who (about 500) filed past them, led by such of the number as were the chosen elders of various congregations, numbering about forty. Many eyes were dimmed with tears of joy and sympathy, and many lips expressed longing for the great Convention mentioned by the Apostle, when all the elect shall meet in glory;—"the General Assembly and church of first-borns, whose names are written in heaven." Many too were the ejaculations of praise for divine blessings upon the eyes of our understanding, and of prayer for continued leading and instruction in the right ways of the Lord; and "The Lord bless thee and keep thee" seemed to be upon every lip.

In one way these Conventions are quite expensive, but in another way they are very inexpensive. Probably \$15 or \$25 per head, would not be too high an average estimate as respects the visitors; and about the same amount per capita for the home congregation. But who can estimate the value of the knowledge and spiritual uplift thus secured, and carried to other hundreds in every direction? Good results have already been noted also from quartering the friends with Christian families of Washington. Several have already become interested and are reading; and we doubt not the Washington church will have a blessing in numbers as well as in interest and love and zeal—tho in these last respects it is difficult to imagine any great improvement, above what was shown by their untiring efforts to serve and please the brethren and in careful preparations made beforehand.

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

## THE BLIGHT OF SIN AND ITS ONLY CURE

*"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life."*—John 3:14, 15.

Israel's experience in the wilderness prolonged thirty-eight years on account of their unreadiness, lack of faith to enter Canaan at first, was doubtless a season of valuable instruction in various ways; tho very little is told us respecting this period. Evidently those years of drilling in the laws, sacrifices, etc., brought the people to a comparatively moral and religious condition; so much so that their next prominent sin was in the nature of boasting of their holiness—pride of heart. Admitting degradation and sin and faithlessness in the past, they felt that they had made great progress and should no longer be dealt with as formerly. Admitting that it had been necessary for Moses and Aaron to rule them imperiously, they denied that this was any longer necessary; and under the leadership of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, quite a sedition developed;—the influence extending so far that it included two hundred and fifty leaders and most prominent men of Israel. Their contention was that all Israel was now holy (Num. 16:2, 3); and that, therefore, Moses and Aaron should no longer be considered the only ones with whom God would communicate,—the intimation being that they were endeavoring to perpetuate a hierarchy which God had not established, and which true Israelites should not recognize.

There is a lesson here for spiritual Israelites: It teaches us not to become heady or highminded or boastful or proud of spiritual attainments and godliness. It teaches us that in God's estimation there is no holiness that does not include humility and full submission to the divine arrangement. It reminds us also of the prophesied rebellion that will take place in the close of the Millennial age, amongst those who will have reached perfection under the Millennial kingdom, some of whom will manifest their unfitness for eternal life by their lack of full submission to the divine arrangement.

Moses called to him the representatives of the insubordination; kindly and patiently he reasoned with Korah, the one who responded to his call, pointing out to him the Lord's arrangement; from the others he received but an insulting refusal to discuss the question. This kindness, forbearance and endeavor to help those whose feet were slipping out of the way, all the more commends the leader to our sympathy and appreciation, and teaches us to be gentle and patient with "those that oppose themselves" to the divine order. (2 Tim. 2:25) But we are not to expect success in every instance, even as Moses had no success in this case; where the heart is wrong it cannot be guided by reason; and pride, boastfulness and ambition are evidence of a wrong condition of heart.

So far from endeavoring to use force against these men, Moses took them at their word and invited them to display the

powers, privileges and divine authority which they claimed; and appointed that they should the next day meet with himself and Aaron and let the Lord by his providences decide matters. Korah's influence over the whole congregation was evidently very great; it is generally easier to influence people by telling them that they are better and greater than they had previously supposed—it works upon their pride. However, the Lord spared the people, tho he gave an illustration of his indignation against their assumptions,—by causing the earth to open and swallow up these three leading "holiness" rebels, their tents, families, etc., and by causing a plague to break out in the camp, in which the two hundred and fifty chief men who had joined in the conspiracy, died. One lesson here is that we should beware that our holiness is of the proper kind—not self-righteousness, but submission to the righteousness which is of God. Although these men did not die the second death, but will, in due time, share in the benefits of the great atonement accomplished by the antitypical Priest, nevertheless, they typified persons who enjoying great favors of the Lord misappropriate these, applying them selfishly and in pride, will die the second death, and with them their allies, sharers in their sin.

One would suppose that so striking a manifestation of the divine will would thoroughly correct the wrong spirit amongst the people, and show them the difference between their boastful self-righteousness and the righteousness of full submission to the divine arrangement which alone could have the divine approval. But not so; human perverseness is shown in the fact that on the next day the leaders of Israel assailed Moses and Aaron with the charges that they were unholy men, murderers—that they had killed on the previous day, by some power of their own, some who were truly the Lord's people. As a consequence the Lord's indignation was enkindled against the people and they were spared, by the interposition of those whom they had traduced, only after 14,700 of their number had perished by pestilence. This same spirit of pride, rebellion, and its consequences may be noted in our day: how many there are who, because not right at heart, are in more or less sympathy with those with whom the Lord has no sympathy! They have seen "heady" ones rise up in the congregation of the Lord, seeking to draw away disciples after themselves, and afterward have seen these rejected of the Lord, instead of becoming great leaders as they expected; they have seen how, in the Lord's providence, the earth (worldliness or various false ideas) swallowed them up, buried them in oblivion so far as leadership was concerned; yet after witnessing the Lord's dealings with these, in putting them out of the light of present truth, etc.,

they are still sympathetic with them and complain that their fall into the darkness and oblivion was not of the Lord, but the fault of his "faithful." These resemble the Israelites who blamed the loss of these "renowned" would-be leaders upon the Lord's truly appointed servants, Moses and Aaron. Let us learn from this lesson to be always on the Lord's side, and to keep our hearts so free from prejudice, pride and self-will, that we may always be able to discern which is the Lord's side in every controversy. Those who do not so, are likely to lose their spiritual life as the 14,700 in this type lost natural life.

After impressing the lesson of divine appointment, the Lord called for the rods of the chief men of every tribe—Aaron representing the tribe of Levi, and these rods were laid over night in the Most Holy; they were brought forth the next morning in the sight of all the people, and no change had taken place in any of them except the one belonging to Aaron, which was covered with buds, blossoms and almonds. Thus did the Lord emphasize his choice of the tribe of Levi and of the Aaronic priesthood, and impress the lesson of their recognition upon all Israel. So, too, the Lord has chosen Christ as the High Priest of our order, or profession, and the church and household of faith, to be associated with him in the work of the ministry. These will ultimately be made known to all who desire harmony with the Lord; to all who will enter into the Millennial Canaan:—all the people will then know that God puts a wide difference between the "household of faith" and various teachers of morality, higher criticism, etc., who have denied the faith and who are attempting to teach upon other lines than those laid down in the Scriptures, of which the cross of Christ is the center. The light, the vitality and the fruits of righteousness are centered in the household of faith, and this will be made manifest to all.

Two other incidents of about this time—the close of the wilderness detention,—were the death of Miriam, Moses' sister, and the death of Aaron, his brother. The forty years being about completed, the people were ready now, under the Lord's direction, to enter Canaan. Kadesh Barnea had evidently remained the center of their encampment, and their Tabernacle had evidently continued there, tho of necessity so large a body of people with their flocks and herds must have roamed over quite an extensive area during those thirty-eight years, and of this we find various indications. (Num. 33:19-36) The Canaanites probably feared an invasion and had to some extent fortified the country in the vicinity of Kadesh Barnea, the southern borders of Canaan, and perceiving now that the Israelites were preparing to move, they made an attack upon them and took some prisoners;—probably by way of forewarning and intimidating them. This was the occasion for the vow mentioned in verse 2, that the cities of the Canaanites should be utterly destroyed when taken.

Verse 3 need not be understood to mean that Israel vanquished the Canaanites and destroyed their cities at this time; it is rather to be viewed as a parenthesis, an explanation that afterward, during the campaign of Israel in Palestine, God in harmony with their vow, did deliver to them the cities of the land, and that they did destroy them. They called the place Hormah as a remembrance of their vow. The right of such a total destruction of an enemy and his property would not be allowed in the civilized world today; we are to remember, however that the Lord in these dealings with Israel was making types far reaching in their significance. In the type, the Canaanite and his citadels, etc., represented sin, its enticements, its banishments and strong entrenchments in the weaknesses of the flesh. No compromise or truce with sin is to be made on the part of the new creature; it is to be a war of extermination;—and this was the signification of the type. It helps us to understand the matter much better, too, when we know that those Canaanites who were destroyed were not turned over by the Lord to devils for eternal torment;—but simply went down into the great prison-house of death, just the same as their fathers had done before them, only in a different form of death. It mattered nothing whether these died of pestilence or by the sword;—the time will come anyway, when they shall all be brought forth from the prison-house of death by the great Redeemer, the antitypical seed of Abraham, to have an opportunity of coming to a full knowledge of the truth that they may be saved;—and that everlastingly, if they will, upon condition of their obedience and heart-conformity with the divine will.

Israel made a request of the Edomites (descendants of Esau, their father Jacob's brother) that they might pass through their country with a view of entering Canaan from its eastern side instead of from the southern. The Edomites refused the request, and thus compelled a long and tedious journey around their territory through a very arid, barren country. It was here that the people so recently claiming to

be "all holy" became so discouraged that they again wished that they were back in the land of Egypt and murmured against God and against Moses and against the manna upon which they were still being fed. It was at this juncture as a punishment for their impatience and their despising of the Lord's leading and provision for them, that the Lord sent them the plague of

### THE FIERY SERPENTS

Whether the Lord specially created these serpents, or whether he merely took advantage of circumstances and conditions, as when he sent them the quail, we do not know, nor does it matter. In God's miracles he generally uses means to every end; these are to us miracles because we do not fully comprehend the means employed. As for instance, if we could imagine the knowledge of the *method* of telephoning, or the method of wireless telegraphy to be entirely blotted from the knowledge of man, the results, told in succeeding ages to people who knew not of the methods, would be miracles; we do not class them as such, because we understand the *modus operandi*. The fierceness of the attack of the serpents and the great mortality resulting amongst the Israelites might cause us to wonder; but we are to remember that it is estimated that in India, even at the present time "several thousand people annually die from the bite of the cobra." One writer describing the bite of a certain Brazilian serpent, says: "Even in those cases where the sufferer recovers, for a time the system is injured and the latent virulence of the poison can hardly be eliminated from the same even at the cost of festers, boils and ulcerations which last for many years. The nervous system is also very much affected as giddiness and paralysis are usually amongst the evidences of the strong venom which this reptile extracts by some inexplicable chemistry from perfectly harmless food."

The people had learned something through their experiences, and hence needed not to be told that this visitation of the fiery serpents was a chastisement from the Lord for their murmuring and rebellion. We are to learn in this connection to differentiate between such experiences on the part of the Israelites and similar experiences on the part of the world in general. We are to remember that by the Law Covenant which God made with Israel at Mt. Sinai, he specially pledged their protection from disease and every adverse influence so long as they were faithful and loyal to him, and specially threatened that disloyalty and unfaithfulness would be punished by sickness, calamities, death, etc.—Lev. 26:3-46.

To the Israelite, therefore, sickness and pestilence meant divine wrath—to the other nations it meant the ordinary course of events; they were neither protected from the various scourges of the world nor were these death-dealing scourges specially sent upon them.

The people came to Moses confessing their sin and asking his mediation with the Lord on their behalf; and, God-like, he did not stop to chide them when they were penitent and remorseful, but presented their case before the Lord most heartily. The Lord heard and answered the petition, but in a roundabout manner, well calculated to impress upon them their dependence upon him,—and to provide for us, spiritual Israelites, a great spiritual lesson. The remedy for the bites of the serpents was to look at a brazen (copper) serpent fastened to the top of a pole, said pole probably being carried throughout the camp of Israel, that all the sick, suffering ones might have the opportunity of looking upon it and thus being healed.

We are not to question the meaning of this as a type, for our Lord himself in our Golden Text declares it. The serpent on the pole represented Christ on the cross. True, the serpent represents sin, vileness, evil, pain, suffering; while our Lord Jesus could be our Redeemer only because he was holy, harmless, separate from sinners. The question arises then, Why was the serpent used to represent our Lord? Why was not Moses instructed to make a brazen dove, or a brazen lamb—as representative of the meekness and harmlessness and purity of him who died for us? We answer that a correct appreciation of the answer to this question is the key to an understanding of the great atonement provided by God for man, through the "Man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (1 Tim. 2:5, 6) The serpent represented the atonement transaction better than any other emblem could. The serpent in Eden was Satan's agent and representative in the alluring of our first parents into sin: in this sense of the word the bite of that serpent, the devil, upon our race through our first parents, is destroying all the human family in death,—with the attendant pains, and sufferings on account of which the Apostle declares, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together." (Rom. 8:22) It is impossible to get rid of the sin virus of "that old serpent;" there is



no remedy that we can apply: mankind can only look to God for help; and the help which God provides is through the sending of his Son, the undefiled One. Nor will it do that that undefiled One should visit us and know our troubles and sympathize with us, and counsel us how to get rid of sin. No, this is not sufficient, he may not contradict or undo the Father's decrees, tho he may fulfil them—he may take our place, he may bear our penalty. And thus the Apostle expresses it, "He who knew no sin was *made sin for us*," that we might be made right in the sight of God through him. The serpent then represented sin, in every sense of the word; and as the whole world was serpented or inoculated our Lord must take the place of the sinner in order that the sinner might get free from the sentence; and this is why it was a serpent that was raised on the pole. "He was made sin for us"—treated as the one in whom centered the sin of the whole world.

As the bitten Israelite looked to the brazen serpent and was healed in response, so in the antitype we who are bitten by the serpent of sin, and who are writhing and dying under its virus must look away with the eye of our understanding

(now the eye of faith),—we must look unto Jesus. We must see him as the serpent, as the one who took our place, bore our sin-penalty, became our substitute, and thus bought us from under the sentence of death. It was not sufficient that the Israelite looked into the sky or looked at a lamb or looked at a bird overhead, it was necessary that he look at the brazen serpent. So with us, it will not do that man look at Jesus in various lights and shadows, some believing one thing and some another respecting him; for according to the divine arrangement only the one kind of faith in Christ is efficacious—and that is the faith which recognizes him as the ransom, as our substitute, "Made sin for us." Men may get some blessing from looking at Jesus as a great, model man, a great Jew, a great teacher, etc.; they may find such a look profitable, morally, mentally, physically; but from such a view they cannot get eternal life, they will still perish from the bite of sin unless they do more than this;—only those who view him as the antitype of the serpent in the wilderness have his promise of forgiveness, and acceptance with God unto eternal life.

## "HE GAVE THEM JUDGES"

JUDGES 2 7-16.—NOVEMBER 16.

*"They cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses."*—Psa. 107:19.

Israel's history from the time of the division of Canaan amongst the tribes until the anointing of Saul to be their king, a period of 450 years,\* is called the period of the judges—Joshua being the first judge and Samuel the last. These judge were evidently not elected to their position, but raised to it providentially. But as these judges had no power or authority, collected no revenues and held no office which they could entail upon others, it follows that any power or influence they possessed was a personal one, and to give it weight or force implied a proper acknowledgement of them as divinely appointed or raised up. This arrangement led the people continually to look to God for their helpers and leaders rather than to engage in an ordinary claptrap of politics in which personal ambitions and spoils would dominate and control. God did the nominating, and the people in proportion as they would come into harmony with him took cognizance of his choice (and practically endorsed it or voted for it) by their acceptance of the judge. There may have been a more methodical procedure in some instances, as is intimated in our lesson (verse 7), where the elders of Israel who had witnessed God's miraculous interposition on their behalf and who outlived Joshua, seem to have constituted the judges in the different tribes.

This arrangement by which God gave Israel its judges is in considerable harmony with his dealings with spiritual Israel during this Gospel age—raising up for them from time to time special counselors, deliverers, ministers. Similarly Spiritual Israelites are not to caucus and wire-pull and decide for themselves who shall be their spiritual leaders; but are to regard the Lord as the great Chief Captain, and to look to him to raise up from time to time such spiritual chieftains as he may please. The acceptance of the leadings of these as God's appointees does not necessarily mean their selection by ballot, but may be indicated merely by giving ear to their teachings in harmony with the Word of the Lord. The lead of such spiritual lieutenants of divine appointment will always be marked by spiritual victories and the bringing of the Lord's people into closer heart-relationship with him. Any leadership which does not produce such fruits is evidently not of the Lord; the spirit of the Lord leads not to bondage, ignorance or strife, but to love, joy, peace of heart, liberty of conscience.

Israel needed no congress or legislature, for it had one Law-giver—the Lord—and the Law given at Mt. Sinai was to be perpetually the guide to the nation. The priests and Levites under the law were the appointed helpers of the people in things pertaining to God—to instruct them in the law and represent them in the typical sacrificing, atonement work, etc. In each tribe, also, the elders, according to their capacity, had charge of the civil affairs of the tribe. As for soldiers and a war department, they had none. The divine law was to separate them from other nations, and if they would remain faithful to the Lord he was to be their protector against all antagonists.

Similarly spiritual Zion in every congregation is to look out from amongst themselves fit men for the services needed; God's law is to keep them separate from the schemes and war-fares and entanglements of the world; they are to be his peculiar people, and his pledge to them is that all things shall work together for their good so long as they abide faithful to him. They therefore, need no armies armed with carnal weap-

ons, although they are all soldiers of the cross, pledged to fight against sin, especially each within himself, and to lay down their lives for each other—"the brethren."

If the Book of Judges be read as a fully complete history of Israel for those four and one-half centuries, it would be a discouraging picture, and to some extent give the inference that they were continually in sin and idolatry, and suffering punishment therefor. But this would be an unfair view to take. On the contrary, the record passes by the happy period of Israel's prosperity, and specially points out their deflections from obedience to God and punishments for such transgressions and the deliverances from their troubles through the judges or deliverers whom God raised up for them. That this was in many respects a favorable time for the Israelites is implied in the Lord's promise, "I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counselors as at the beginning."—Isa. 1:26.

Incidentally the story of Ruth and of the parents of Samuel (1 Sam. 1) give us little glimpses of the other side of the matter—of the God-fearing piety prevalent amongst many of the people, the happiness and contentment enjoyed. In our own day if we judge of the affairs of the world wholly by the daily history and details, in the newspapers, we might get the impression that crimes, strikes and accidents and imprisonments constituted the whole life in our own land; the great mass of the people attending to the ordinary affairs of life are scarcely mentioned. In accordance with this are the following lines from Whittier in which he rejoices in this land of liberty and blessing, notwithstanding the unfavorable reports thereof which go out to the world daily through the press,—

"Whate'er of folly, shame, or crime  
Within thy mighty bounds transpires,  
With speed defying space or time  
Comes to us on the accusing wires;

"While all thy wealth of noble deeds,  
Thy homes of peace, thy votes unsold,  
Thy love that pleads for human needs,  
The wrongs redressed, but half is told!"

The Israelites had been instructed by the Lord to utterly exterminate the people of the land, which extermination we saw in previous lesson prefigured our conquests as spiritual Israelites over the desires of the fallen nature. Israel, however, settled down to enjoy the Land of Promise without fully exterminating the condemned ones; and the false religion of the latter, later on contaminated the Israelites through friendship and fellowship; and thus these whom God had condemned gradually alienated the hearts of many from their full, proper loyalty to the Lord; seducing many of them into a lascivious idolatry. So with the spiritual Israelites who do not wage a valiant battle against the natural desires of their own fallen flesh—they find shortly that the flesh prospers at the expense of the spiritual life and that truces with the flesh mean that their love for the Lord is gradually cooled until some form of idolatry creeps in—the love of money, or of praise of men or of self, etc., dividing with the Lord the love and reverence of their hearts.

We are not to suppose that all the Israelites fell away into idolatry; we are rather to understand that a considerable number of them became alienated for a time, repeatedly, from the

\* MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. 11, page 49.

love and worship of the Lord, and thus repeatedly brought upon them the Lord's disfavor. Verse 16 supports this thought, suggesting to our minds that our lesson is a condensed statement of the whole period of the judges—over four hundred years. Applying this to spiritual Israel we are not to expect that the Lord's displeasure with his people would delay until they had fully and completely gone into idolatry to self or wealth or fame; but rather that when some of the affections of the heart begin to go out to other things, the Lord's chastisements would be sent to reprove and rebuke and correct, while still there is in our hearts something of obedience and love toward him;—before the world, the flesh and the adversary should have time to capture us completely.

These records of divine chastisements, and Israel's subsequent repentance, and the Lord's deliverances, were all proofs of the divine love and care for that consecrated people. So far as we have information divine power was not exercised thus upon other unconsecrated nations, for their reproof and correction, etc. They were left as strangers, foreigners, aliens from God and from his promises. So now the Lord's corrections in righteousness, his chastisements, etc., are evidences of special protection and care and relationship to the "house of sons." It is because of our acceptance in Christ and our consecration to the Lord, that he, in turn, has accepted us as sons and gives us the experiences, trials and difficulties needful to our testing

and character-development; and it is to the intent that we may realize the treachery and the seductive influences of our own fallen natures, represented by the Amalekites and Canaanites, and that we may utterly destroy these, and thus come eventually into the condition mentioned by the Apostle when he declares that the consecrated should bring every thought into captivity to the will of God in Christ.—2 Cor. 10:5.

When fleshly Israel learned one lesson after another, and as fast as each was learned sent a cry of loyalty up to God, his power was exercised on their behalf and their deliverance was effected. So with the Spiritual Israelite when he recognizes the true situation and with thorough repentance turns unto the Lord and cries for deliverance from his own weaknesses and imperfections according to the flesh;—his prayer is heard and his deliverance is provided for with the assurance that the Lord's grace is sufficient. The condition of the spiritual Israelite is represented in our Golden Text, "They cry unto the Lord in their trouble and he saves them out of their distresses." Such a cry to the Lord, however, implies that the sins and weaknesses of the flesh were contrary to the transgressor's will; it implies that in some manner he was seduced or entangled by the world, the flesh of the adversary and that his heart is still loyal to the Lord and to the truth. All such who cry unto the Lord in sincerity and faith shall be heard, shall be delivered,—his grace is sufficient for us.

## WHO IS WORTHY?

REV. 5:2.

In the visions of the Apocalypse we read of a wonderful scroll in the right hand of the great King who sits upon the throne of universal dominion. This scroll is a forceful representation of the divine plan, originally existing only in the mind of God, and which could not be made known to men until some one was found worthy to open the seals and display it to view. But "no one in heaven nor in earth was able to open the scroll, neither to look thereon," until one came whom the Revelator describes as "The Lion [the strong one] of the tribe of Judah, the root of David," of whom the testimony is given—"Thou art worthy to take the scroll and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain and hast redeemed to God by thy blood out of every kindred and people and nation; and hast made them unto our God a kingdom and priesthood; and they shall reign on the earth."—Rev. 5:1-5, 9, 10.

Excepting the bare promise (written on the outside of the scroll—verse 1) of salvation through the Seed of the woman, nothing could be known of the wonderful scheme for human restitution until the Son of God, having left the glory of the spiritual nature, took our nature and by the sacrifice of himself redeemed us from death. Then, having his righteousness imputed to us by faith, we are counted worthy to look upon the scroll as he opens the seals one after another.

Great was the favor bestowed upon the Strong One of the tribe of Judah, in being permitted to open the seals—to carry out and make manifest the grand designs of infinite love—and great is the privilege of those who are permitted to look thereon as the seals are opened. It is not our purpose here, however, to treat of the peculiar symbols relating to the opening of the seals, but rather of what constitutes worthiness in us to look thereon, and what favor of God to us is implied in this privilege of looking.

The knowledge of God's purposes is due only to those able and anxious to co-operate with him in their development; for God does not display his plans to satisfy mere idle curiosity. First, then, if we would comprehend what is revealed within the scroll we must have faith in what is written on the outside—the promised redemption through the precious blood of Christ—and must be sincerely desirous of knowing the details of God's plan in order to an earnest co-operation with it. In other words, there must be the earnest inquiry arising from a heart grateful for the promise of life through the Redeemer—"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Such, and such only, are worthy to know, and such only ever come to see, in the sense of understanding and appreciating, the deep things of God written within the scroll. Such are the called according to the divine purpose, to be educated in and to serve the truth. Such are the righteous for whom the light (truth) is sown. Such was our Lord's attitude when he said, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." (Heb. 10:7) He was meek and lowly of heart and ever ready to render implicit obedience to the will of God; and it is to those who are similarly meek that he was sent to preach the good tidings (Isa. 61:1)—to open the scroll. "The meek will he guide in judgment; the meek will he teach his way." (Psa. 25:9) If any man have this evidence of worthiness—this acquaintance with the truth—let him rejoice in his privilege and

by his works manifest his continued worthiness.—Psa 19:13.

This worthiness is inquired for not only at the beginning, but all along the path of light. If we are not found worthy by the various tests applied from time to time, we cannot proceed in the path of light; and unless the unfaithful ones arouse themselves to greater diligence and watchfulness, the light that already is in them will become darkness. And how great, how intense must be the darkness of one cast out of light! (Matt. 6:23) To find the glorious hope that once inspired our hearts slipping away and the truth whereon we built that hope beginning to seem like an old song or an idle tale, or as relics of the past to be displaced at any time by any plausible subterfuge of error which our wily adversary may be pleased to palm off as advanced divine truth, are indications that should arouse any one who discovers them to a realization of the fact that he is going into darkness—a darkness that will only become the more intense as he slips and slides along the backward track.

All along the way, as we have said, we will find tests applied to prove our worthiness to proceed from knowledge to knowledge and from grace to grace. Who is worthy?—worthy to receive the truth, worthy to continue in the truth, worthy to suffer and to endure hardness as a good soldier for the truth, and finally to be exalted to power and great glory when truth and righteousness shall be exalted in the earth and their glorious triumph begun?

Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." (Luke 9:23) At the very beginning of our course we each found the cross confronting us, and had we not taken it up we would not have been counted worthy even to look with intelligent appreciation into the precious truths of God's plan. And as we advance from step to step and find the truth increasingly precious—sweeter than honey from the honey comb—we have these additional evidences of continued worthiness and should greatly rejoice in them as such. Our possession of these truths has thus far proved us meek enough to discard the popular theology of the nominal church and be counted as heretics, turncoats, fanatics, cranks, or whatever our former friends are, in their ignorance, now pleased to term us. And it has proved us meek enough to bear willingly this reproach for the great joy of thus realizing the Lord's approval, and of seeing by faith the great blessings in store for us if faithful unto the end.

But "let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall;" for sudden and sharp will be many of the tests applied to prove our continued faithfulness. The world, the flesh and the devil all conspire to allure, ensnare and overcome us. The world will present its allurements through friends or wife or husband or children. They will try to encroach upon the clearly defined line which you have drawn between yourself and the world. Then the flesh will grow weary in fighting the good fight of faith, weary of the reproaches of the world, weary of the alienation of former friends and weary of the self-denying, sacrificing and daily cross-bearing life. Then if you turn aside for a moment to ponder on these things the devil will quickly see his opportunity and will cunningly devise some trial specially

suiting to your peculiar condition of mind, and a crisis comes in your experience, the result of which will prove the exact strength of your devotion to God and his truth. These tests God permits and even desires to have come upon us, in order that we may be thoroughly tried and proved either worthy or unworthy of the great reward he has in keeping for those who remain faithful unto death.

The Lord is seeking his precious jewels. Many of them are indeed diamonds in the rough. The real diamond is a noble, loyal, faithful character, devoted and uncompromising in its allegiance to God. Sometimes the circumstances of life have deprived such of education or culture and have left them only sufficient means for the barest necessities of life. But no matter, God's eye is on them: character is what he is looking for, and in due time, when that character is sufficiently developed, confirmed, tested and proved worthy of exaltation, he can and will add to it all the glories of knowledge and wisdom and grace and beauty. But first he will subject it to all the necessary tests. If it is a true diamond it will receive and it will also transmit to others the light of divine truth. Nothing so gloriously reflects the truth as the worthy character of the true and faithful saint.

Another way of testing a diamond is to put it under pressure. If it is a real diamond it will stand the pressure, for the diamond is the hardest substance known; but if it is not a real diamond it will go to pieces and thus prove itself spurious. So God allows us to come under the constant pressure of years of toil and care and self-sacrifice to see how we will endure; and blessed is that diamond-proved character that endures to the end.—Jas. 1:12; Matt. 10:22.

Sometimes the tests come in the way of trials of faith, and we are called upon to prove ourselves whether we be in the faith (2 Cor. 13:5) when some subtle errors are presented to us as advanced truth. But if we know the voice of the "Good Shepherd" we will not be easily beguiled. We remember the inspired counsel, "To the law and the testimony: if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light

in them" (Isa. 8:20); and to the law and the testimony we go, and relying implicitly upon this as the infallible teaching of the Spirit of God, we are enabled to arrive at definite, clear and positive doctrine. We are not left in doubt as to what is truth, but are enabled to give a solid Scriptural reason for the hope that is in us, on which hope we dare implicitly to rest our faith, and with humble boldness to successfully withstand the assaults of error. But oh, how dead to selfish ambition, how fully devoted to the will of God such must be!

Let us, dearly beloved, as we realize that thus far God has counted us worthy to look upon the scroll of his plan which has been unsealed for us by our blessed Lord Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, prove our worthiness to continue to look therein and to read the wondrous things of his law, by faithful obedience and loyalty to it in all things. Let us not undervalue our great privilege in being counted worthy to suffer some reproach and some hardness as good soldiers for the truth's sake; and also in being counted worthy to have some part in the blessed ministry of reflecting the light of divine truth; let us prove ourselves jewels of rarest value, diamonds indeed, heartily receiving and beautifully transmitting to others the light of truth, and faithfully enduring the severest pressure that God may permit to come upon us; for, if faithful in these small things we shall in due time be counted worthy also to reign with Christ in power and great glory. Let us not be like some who have only a little good earth on the surface of their hearts while the heart is really hard and stony. Let the good seed of divine truth sink down and take deep root, and then let it branch out in the light and bear its abundant fruitage to the Master's glory. So shall we be accounted worthy to see the King in his beauty and to live and reign with him as his beloved bride and joint-heir. And when to the "worthy Lamb that was slain" the voices of the multitude ascribe blessing and honor and glory and power, they will also exclaim, "Let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to him for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."—Rev. 5:13; 19:7.

## THEY ALSO HAVE ERRED THROUGH WINE

ISAIAH 28:1-7.—NOVEMBER 23.

This is set before us as a temperance lesson. We will not say that it was not built upon certain conditions obtaining in Isaiah's time—that intoxication was a crying evil amongst the Israelites; but we do say that in our understanding this is a prophecy belonging specially to our day—whatever may have been the force, meaning or application in the day in which it was written. The whole tenor of this chapter as well as the following one, the twenty-ninth, in our judgment, proves this. Ephraim, used by the prophet as a name for the ten tribes of Israel in contradistinction to the two tribes called Judah, would seem to represent in our day nominal Christendom, and the drunkards of Ephraim would represent the intoxication of Christendom—not literal alcoholic intoxication, but the intoxication of error, of false doctrine, of human schemes and plans, the spirit of man and of the adversary in contradistinction to the spirit, the teaching of the Lord. This intoxication is referred to later on by the same prophet, saying, "They are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger but not with strong drink. For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep [spiritual stupor], and hath closed your eyes." (Isa. 29:9-12) It is again referred to as the wine of Babylon with which all people have been intoxicated.—Rev. 17:2; 18:3.

The fall of nominal spiritual Israel, the fall of Babylon in the great time of trouble now approaching, is described in verses 2, 3. All who do not get rid of this intoxication of error, even the members of the spiritual house, will have their portion with the world and with hypocrites in this coming storm, which will wreck completely our present civilization, social, political, financial and ecclesiastical. The glory of Babylon at the present time is as that of a beautiful flower, but it shall quickly fade, its riches and its pride will cause it to be the more quickly devoured—as are the first fruits of the summer—by the lawless ones, the anarchists, who will be bred of discontent, and who will be developed rapidly as a result of the iniquity that will prevail because of this drunkenness of Babylon with false doctrines and false expectation and blind stupor to the great changes of dispensation now taking place.

The explanation of a blindness, stupor and drunkenness so general as to affect not only the priests and prophets but all the people of Christendom, is referred to in verse 7. Babylon has had indeed the golden cup of the Lord's Word in her hands and has affected to give from it to the people the spirit of the Lord, but instead she has filled the cup and presents as the teaching of God's Word intoxicating errors which have

misled the so-called Christian world. Thus the Adversary has used the nominal church of God as his tool to deceive all that dwell upon the face of the whole earth—to misrepresent the divine character and plan. (Rev. 14:18) Thank God for the promise that the time is coming when that old serpent, the devil, Satan, shall be bound a thousand years that he shall deceive the nations no more until the thousand years are finished!—Rev. 20:3.

In the midst of such a general declaration of the drunkenness of mystic Babylon and the storm of divine indignation about to overflow churchianity, it is comforting to find that the Lord breaks in upon the narrative, suggesting that in the midst of such general intoxication of error there will be a residue of God's people whom he can approve and bless. Verses 5, 6, call the little flock to our attention—the Lord's jewels. In the midst of all this confusion incidental to the fall of Babylon, the Lord himself will crown his faithful with glory and beauty. Even in the present life his truth in their hearts shall cause their faces to shine, and their table shall be spread even in the midst of those who are their enemies, who will be compelled to admit that these have meat to eat that the world knoweth not of and that they have a filling of the Lord's spirit that gives them joy and peace even in the midst of trials and difficulties. It will be more than this; for very shortly it will mean that they shall receive at the Lord's hands the crown of life—be changed and receive the fulness of divine favor and blessing—glory, honor, immortality and joint-heirship with their Redeemer in his kingdom.

These enlightened by the Lord and filled with his spirit will have sounder judgment even in the present life and be able to do valiantly in disputing and disproving the spirit of error and its proud and boastful claims; and by and by, when changed and made partakers of the kingdom glories, the Apostle assures us that these shall be amongst the judges of the world, saying, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" They will then with their dear Redeemer occupy the place of judgment during the Judgment day, the Millennial age, and overcome all the forces of error and darkness and evil, so that eventually the Lord shall bruise Satan under their feet, wholly overthrow his kingdom and influence, and establish in its stead the kingdom of God under the whole heavens, destroying all who would corrupt the earth, bringing it, in harmony with the Lord's prayer, to that condition in which God's will shall be done on earth even as it is done in heaven.



## INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED

### POSITION OF THE WORLD IN MILLENNIAL AGE

**Question.**—Are the sins of the world class all canceled at death? or, is only their Adamic penalty paid? and do they have an individual penalty still to pay?

**Answer.**—The sins of the whole world are paid, as far as divine justice is concerned—that is to say—God's account against Adam and his posterity has been sold, transferred and set over to him who purchased the same with his own precious blood.

The sins of the world are not canceled, so far as they are concerned; but a way is opened up, under the New Covenant, by which each can obtain a release. The terms are that when brought to a knowledge of Christ and the redemption in him each for himself shall will to reform and no longer to serve sin, but to serve the Redeemer and to obey him.

In view of this opportunity of retracing steps, it is proper for us to say that every word and action on the part of the world is either building up character or undermining it—either blessing or injuring the doer—either increasing or decreasing the number and weight of his stripes of punishment, all of which will be corrective.

Thus we may say that the Adamic penalty is set aside until such time as the individual shall have been granted a trial on his own account. If in this trial on his own account he sins wilfully refusing to follow the instructions of his Redeemer, he will be dropped back again into the original penalty—"returned into sheol"—which will be the second death.

Thus seen, the only individual penalty they have to pay will be that represented in their own degradation. We might include in this penalty any sins which they might commit in the present life against any degree of light; for such sins bring a special searing of conscience which the same deeds committed in ignorance would not bring. Hence all who thus sin against light receive proportionately a deeper degradation and will have correspondingly the more difficulty in extricating themselves, and returning to perfection under the favorable conditions of the next age.

The world of mankind are not reckoned as coming into existence a second time, but as having their previous existence revived and continued, with the privilege of accepting Christ under the New Covenant, and being regenerated by him, and thus attaining life—resurrection by judgment, which will progress throughout the Millennial age, and reach completion at its close—those who accept there will reach perfect life, while those who reject will there be destroyed in the second death. From this standpoint the only effect of good and evil in the present life will be upon man's own conscience and character.

In respect to 1 Pet. 4:6, briefly, I understand this to mean: that for instance we who hear the Gospel and who accept its terms have a two-fold standing—or are viewed in life from two different standpoints. The world views us and judges us according to the flesh, as human beings, just the same as the remainder of the world, but God judges us differently—to him we are new creatures, and he judges us according to our spirit, will, intention, and not according to the weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh. Hence it is that although we know that in our flesh dwelleth no perfection, nevertheless "The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us"—because God judges us not according to the flesh but according to the spirit.

### USE OF FERMENTED WINE

**Question.**—Is there any prohibition in the Mosaic Law respecting the use of fermented wine? Was the use of unfermented grape juice not authorized by the Jewish arrangement?

**Answer.**—We do not know of any place in the Mosaic Law in which the priests of that system were prohibited the use of wine. But if you know of such a statement kindly draw our attention to it. But even if this had been the case, it would not typify our Lord's life from Jordan to Calvary; for the Scriptural declaration respecting our Lord is that he did use wine. You remember they said of him, "Behold a wine-bibber and a glutton"—not, we presume, because he over-indulged, in either eating or drinking, but simply because he was less abstemious in respect to food and drink than John the Baptist, his Forerunner.

The prohibition of leaven would certainly apply as much to liquids as to solids during the Passover season amongst the

Jews; but it is a mistake to suppose that wine contains any leaven after it is made. Leaven is sometimes added to grape juice in order to hasten the fermentation; but when the fermentation has all worked off the remaining wine is purer, freer from ferment and everything that would produce ferment than ever it was before. So far as we are aware, the Jews had no method of preserving grape juice unfermented. Their bottles were made of skin, and our Lord's parable shows that if new wine (grape juice) were put into old skin bottles that had lost their elasticity, the ferment would burst them, and the wine be lost; and hence the custom of putting new wine into new bottles, which would resist the strain of fermentation. Since the fermentation of grape juice sets in speedily, you can readily see that there would be no wine in all Palestine that had not finished its working or fermentation several months before the Passover season.

There are few persons more appreciative than ourselves of total abstinence from all intoxicating liquors; yet we do not permit our opposition to intemperance to warp our judgment in respect to the use of wine mentioned in the Scriptures. I explain the difference between the customs of that time and this by the fact, first, that they had a comparatively mild wine, which contained only a small quantity of alcohol, the product of the grape; and further, by the fact that their climate and other conditions were less inclined to lead to excesses than are ours. As you perhaps have noticed, we generally use, as "fruit of the vine," at our Memorial Supper, at Allegheny, either hermetically sealed grape juice, or the strained juice of crushed and stewed raisins.

Some tell us that the Hebrews never use the ordinary fermented wine during the Passover week. They no doubt are honest in intention, although they misrepresent the facts. For instance, if they inquire of a Hebrew—"Do the Jews during the Passover week use the ordinary wine?" the Hebrew would answer, "Oh, my, no, never—never!" From this they draw the inference that he means that they use nonalcoholic wine, and perhaps they are foreigners of tongue to each other, and but imperfectly catch each other's thoughts and unintentionally deceive each other. But what the Hebrew did mean was that he would not think of buying wine which he would use during Passover week from any ordinary wine-seller—just as the strict Hebrew would not think at any time of buying his meat from an ordinary butcher, but only from a Hebrew butcher, whose beef was killed in the presence of a rabbi, and duly attested to have been killed according to the Mosaic Law. This to the Jew would be clean meat, while any other would be unclean. Similarly would the orthodox Jew act in respect to his wine, especially that used during the Passover week. It must come through what he recognizes as the legitimate channels guaranteed that no leaven ever came in contact with it, and that no Gentile ever had anything to do with it. To satisfy ourselves on the subject, we procured from a very particular Jew a bottle of the kind of wine thus approved. We found it to be of the ordinary alcoholic kind.

### YOUR HOUSE LEFT DESOLATE

**Question.**—Were the Jews cast into outer darkness about A. D. 70? or five days before the crucifixion, when our Lord said, "Your house is left unto you desolate"?—Matt. 8:12; 23:38.

**Answer.**—As a house, or nation, Israel was rejected of the Lord at the time of the crucifixion, because of unpreparedness to receive the Lamb of God, the Messiah; but while the nation was there rejected and could no longer hope to be the seed which should be the blessed of all nations, nevertheless, in selecting the new nation, the holy nation out of every kindred, people and tongue, God was pleased to give the first opportunity of identification with the new nation to any of the fleshly Israelites who were Israelites indeed, and without guile. Consequently the Gospel went first to them and was confined to them for three and a half years,—Cornelius being the first Gentile convert. All of the period from our Lord's crucifixion down to the utter destruction of the Jewish polity A. D. 70, was the period of testing to that people: some of them, in right condition of heart, were accepted into the light and privileges then due; others, unworthy, were rejected from all divine favor and were in consequent darkness respecting transpiring events and ultimately felt the severity of the trouble figuratively called "weeping and gnashing of teeth."

## FRIENDSHIPS

"Cæsar's friends? or friends of Jesus?  
Solemn question for today!  
Friends of Cæsar! friends of Jesus!  
Take your sides without delay.

If ye pause for man's forbidding,  
Cæsar's friendship ye secure;  
If ye do the Father's bidding,  
Scorn, reproach, ye shall endure."