

THE WATCH TOWER is getting better and better as we near the end; and how precious are its lessons to all! As we visit each place we hear many expressions of appreciation from the friends. I close with Christian love.

Your loving brother in Christ, THOS. P. YATES.

SWORD OF TRUTH FLASHING RIGHT AND LEFT

Dear Brother Russell:—

Wherever I go, among college men or others, I find present truth permeating remarkably, able financial and business men even conceding that an unparalleled panic is coming. Great numbers advance some of present truth that must have come from the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, and do not know where it came from. This demonstrates to my mind that these fundamental truths which are to unify all the human race are making rapid advance beyond those of the ideas of federation that are now operating to some extent among the denominations. Ashamed of the spectacle of a house divided against itself, as nominal Christendom is, they are striving for an impossible unity, which at best can be but nominal.

The triumph of truth is now beginning to show a glorious reality; thanks be to our heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus, and to you, the faithful under-shepherd, and to all of the co-workers for the kingdom of heaven!

Standing on the "sea of glass" we are lost in wonder as we see clearly this mighty conflict—the sword of truth flashing right and left, forcing out the adversary from his refuge of lies. The words of a poet, "Lean far out into silence and listen for the thunder of the voice of God," have now a literal application for those who have the hearing ear. Marvelous!

Surely Satan is being bound! Longing for that day when truth shall triumph, the whole groaning creation have cried in hope,

"Truth crushed to earth shall rise again;
The eternal years of God are hers."

PILGRIM BROTHER HAYDEN SAMSON—DECEASED

Many of our readers knew and dearly loved Brother Hayden Samson, who has served the Lord and the Brethren under the auspices of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society for the past fourteen years. For several years past he has been in feeble health—yet persevered to lay down his life in the service of the Lord, the truth and the brethren. Returning home he experienced a severe attack of indigestion January Twenty-Fourth. He got relief, however, and went to bed as usual.

O glorious day! At last it has come—literally in sight!

Your brother trying to help in the harvest work,
NEWTON T. HARTSHORN,—N. H.

THINKS "WATCH TOWER" TIMED TO MINUTE

Dear Brother Russell:—

A deep sense of appreciation to the Lord for the results of your labors in his name, particularly for the many blessings I am receiving from the reading of back TOWERS, and especially from the one just finished (June 1, 1900), urges me to express my thanks to you and to the Lord. I never received so much in such a short space as in this WATCH TOWER. It seemed as if almost every paragraph was written specially for me and timed right to the minute. I notice in so many of the letters written by the dear friends that questions which perplexed them were so often answered in the next TOWER, without suggestion. I have the same experience, both with the current TOWERS and the old ones; in fact, some of my experiences and the reading following them have startled me by their remarkable evidence of the Lord's leading and providence.

Some of the letters are so inspiring, and it is so interesting to watch the Truth grow! I read a little faster than a year's WATCH TOWERS a month, so while I have lost many blessings in experiences, yet the Lord makes up to me in this way.

I have recently seen a little souvenir with your picture and some quotations, with comment. It touched me deeply, and I hope to get some when I place my next order.

My wife (Sister H.) continues to make beautiful progress along the narrow way, and is truly a great help and inspiration to me. In harmony with comment on the MANNA text for Sept. 1, we are very thankful to God for the leading he provides for us. It is our prayer that you may be kept faithful and strong till all the divine pleasure may be fully accomplished in you. May we all meet soon in the general assembly of the church of the first-borns!

Your brother in hope.

W. E. HULLINGER.

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JOB'S EXPERIENCES TYPICAL OF HUMAN HISTORY

"All these things happened unto them for ensamples [margin, types], and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages are come."—1 Corinthians 10:11.

The Book of Job is credited with being the finest piece of literature in the Hebrew language. It is a poem: and all scholars admit that no translation yet given does it justice. Martin Luther, after reviewing his last effort to translate it into the German, said, "Job is suffering more from my version than from the taunts of his friends, and would prefer his dunghill to my translation of his lamentation." The Book of Job "is admitted, with hardly a dissenting voice, to be the most sublime religious poem in the literature of the world," said Samuel Cox. "I call that one of the grandest things ever written with pen. . . . There is nothing written, in the Bible nor out of it, of equal literary merit," said Thomas Carlyle.

Whoever was used of God as the penman, his name is not given. The book is introduced with a prose narrative of Job's losses and sufferings. (The account of Satan's conversation with God concerning Job should be considered as allegorical—after the style of *Pilgrim's Progress*.) Then his patient endurance is set forth. Next follow the poetic colloquies between Job and his three friends, then Elihu's argument, then the Almighty's address, then Job's confession. The conclusion, relating to Job's return to favor and blessing, and his death, is in prose.

Some have assumed that the Book of Job is merely a parable; and that Job himself is merely an imaginary character. But if this were the case, the teachings of the book would not be different. However, we see no cause to doubt that such a person did live and pass through the experiences related. In Ezekiel 14:14 and James 5:11, Job is classed with other holy men, which would not be the case were this narrative merely a parable. Besides, there are particular details given, such as are not common to parables.

The fact that Job lived a hundred and forty years after his adversities, or probably over two hundred years in all, together with the fact that neither he nor his friends make any allusion to Israel or Moses or the Law, nor to Abraham and God's Covenant made with him, seems to indicate beyond doubt that he belonged to the Patriarchal age. Possibly he lived about the same time as Abraham. His home was evidently in Arabia, and probably not far from Palestine.

Job is introduced as a man of great learning and influence; as a man of great piety, who knew and revered God and appreciated justice; as a man of great generosity, who considered the widow and the orphan; and as a merchant prince of great wealth, who by his numerous servants and three thousand camels, carried on an extended and very prosperous traffic.

Suddenly disaster came upon him and he was bereft of his children, his wealth, his influence and his health. He sought in vain for an explanation as to why God should permit such evils to befall him. Yet still he trusted in God, saying, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him!" His wife urged that it had been without divine appreciation that he had sought to do justice and mercy all his life, and exclaimed, "Curse God and die!"

His three friends came to visit him, and, taking much the same view, told him in lengthy argument that he must have been a great sinner and a hypocrite. But, conscious of his own heart-honesty toward God, Job defends himself and goes to too great an extreme in declaring his innocence, but silences his critics. He seems to realize his need of some one to represent his cause before the Lord. He cries out that he is as righteous as he knows how to be; that he cannot reason the matter with God, being so much beneath him in knowledge

and power. He declares that the wilfully wicked are not so troubled, while he who has pursued righteousness is so afflicted that life has no further pleasure and he wishes that he had never been born. (Chapters 9, 10 and 16.) Feeling his own insufficiency to state his case before the great Jehovah, he desires a "daysman [a mediator] betwixt" God and himself. —Chapters 9:33; 16:21.

Job's masterly reply to the false reasonings of his friends (which many improperly quote as inspired), and his expressions of confidence in God and of his ultimate deliverance, are clearly presented in Chapter 13:1-16. And then, with prophetic wisdom, in Chapter 14, he presents a most wonderful statement of the course of God's dealing with mankind.

THE PROBLEM OF THE AGES

The question which perplexed Job and confused his reasonings was the same that for centuries has confused others of God's people; namely, Why does God permit evil (calamities, afflictions, etc.) to come upon his faithful servants? and why are the wicked permitted to flourish? But not until the Gospel dispensation was it possible for any to know the mind of God on this subject; for it is one of the deep things which could be revealed only by the spirit of God, and only to those begotten of that spirit, as St. Paul explains. (1 Corinthians 2:9-14) And the holy Spirit was not thus given, as a guide and teacher, until after Christ had redeemed us and ascended up on high, there to present his sacrifice as the price of our return to divine favor, peace and communion.

Although many are still in the dark on this subject, it is now open and clear to all the earnest ones to whom "it is granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven," to understand "the deep things of God." (Matthew 13:11; 1 Corinthians 2:10) These see that the reign of evil, the reign of Sin and Death, under Satan, the prince of this world, is permitted for two reasons: first, that all men may gain a full experience of the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the bitterness of its legitimate fruit; and, second, that God's people may be fully tried and tested as to their loyalty to God in the shadow of affliction and trial, as well as in the sunshine of health and prosperity.

Thus while God did not directly cause the evil state of things which surrounds us in nature and among men, but let it come upon men as the legitimate result, or fruit, of disobedience, sin, yet he does make use of the wrath of man and the sins of men and the animosity of Satan to work out grand designs which they do not comprehend, and of which his children know only by faith in his Word of revelation. For instance, how little did Satan and those malicious Jewish priests and Pharisees and those heartless Roman soldiers know that they were assisting in the working out of the divine plan when insulting, mocking and crucifying the Lamb of God!

And so it is with the many afflictions of God's people—especially those of the little flock, the bride of Christ. Trials are designed to fit and polish them for the greater usefulness and honor in the future developments of God's great plan. Thus, regardless of the wilfulness or the ignorance of the persecutors, these trials of faith and patience are working out for such a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." This they do by preparing the called ones to be heirs of glory, by cultivating patience, experience, brotherly sympathy and love—which is God-likeness. Such, and such only can rejoice in tribulation and realize that all things—bad as well as good; unfavorable, as well as favorable—will be overruled in God's providence for their ultimate benefit.

JOB'S HOPE OF A RESURRECTION

But, returning to our consideration of Job, let us note in Chapter 14 some of his prophetic wisdom. The first four verses graphically picture what all of experience realize—that human life under present conditions is full of trial and sorrow, from the cradle to the tomb. And Job shows that he realizes that as a son of fallen parentage he could not be perfect, free from sin, clean, in the full sense of the word.

In verses 5, 6, he tells the Lord that he recognizes the fact that the authority and power to limit man's days are in his hands, but urges (not seeing the ministry of trouble), Why not let me and all men live out our short time in peace—even as we would not afflict a hireling who already has a heavy, burdensome task!

Verses 7-10 are close reasonings respecting the utter hopelessness of man in death, so far as any powers of his own are concerned. A tree may die and yet its root retain life, which, under favorable conditions, may spring up into another tree. But when man dies there is no root left, no spark of life remains. He giveth up the spirit of life, and where is he?

Having confessed that there is no ground for hope inherent in man, Job begins to express the only, the real hope of our race—a resurrection—see verses 12, 13. Man lies down in

death and loses all power to arouse himself—nor can he be resuscitated from the sleep of death by any one, until God's due time. This will be the resurrection morning, the Millennial day, when the present symbolic heavens shall have passed away, and the new heavens or new spiritual ruling power—Christ's kingdom—shall have come into control of the world. In this Job fully agrees with the teachings of our Lord and the apostles.

The more he thinks of that blessed time when evil shall no more have dominion, but when a King shall reign in righteousness and princes shall execute judgment, the more he wishes he might die and be at rest. He exclaims (verse 13), "Oh, that thou wouldst hide me in the grave [*sheol*]; that thou wouldst keep me secret [hidden] until thy wrath be past; that thou wouldst appoint me a set time and remember me!" Job had faith in a resurrection, else he would never have uttered this prayer for death—for hiding in the grave. But he preferred death, and desired to sleep (verse 12) until the morning, for one reason only—that he might have no further experience with sin and with God's wrath—evil.

A short period in the end of the Gospel age is specially called "the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God," because it will be "a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." Yet the entire period from the time Adam fell is called a time of divine wrath, and properly so; for in all this long period "the wrath of God is revealed against all unrighteousness," in a variety of ways. While Love is a controlling principle in the divine government, it can operate only in harmony with Justice and Wisdom. It was both just and wise to let man feel the real weight of condemnation to death incurred by wilful transgression, in order that when Love should in due time provide a ransom and a resurrection, the culprit might the more gladly avail himself of the provided favors of restitution and everlasting life. Thus death and all the evils permitted to come upon the culprit race are manifestations of God's wrath, which will be yet further shown in the great time of trouble. This will be followed by full and clear manifestations of God's love and favor in Christ and the glorified church during the Millennial age.—Romans 1:18.

In verses 14 and 15, he puts the question pointedly, as though to determine and settle his faith; but he immediately answers affirmatively: "Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee [and awake out of the sleep of Adam's death—compare John 5:28, 29]; Thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands"—for his people are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus.—Ephesians 2:10.

ELIHU'S HOPE OF A REDEEMER

When Job had refuted the arguments of his three friends, Elihu (whose name signifies God himself) spoke from a different standpoint, reproving the three friends as well as Job. Elihu shows Job that he had been reasoning in part from a wrong premise—that he must not expect to fully comprehend all the ways of One so far above him, but must trust in God's justice and in his wisdom. And in Chapter 33:23, 24 he shows the one thing necessary to man's recovery from the power of death, and his restoration to divine favor, saying, "If there be with him a messenger as defender, one of a thousand [i. e., a rare one] to declare his own righteousness for man, then will God be gracious unto him [man] and say, Release him from going down to the grave; I have found a ransom."

This is indeed the case with man. God's wisdom and justice cannot be impugned. The sentence of death is justly upon all men through father Adam. (Romans 5:12) But God has provided us a Redeemer, Christ Jesus our Lord; and he, in harmony with the Father's plan, became a man, and then gave himself a ransom-price for all by paying the death-penalty that was upon Adam. And as soon as the bride, otherwise called his body and the temple, is complete, this great Mediator will stand forward to declare his righteousness as for, or applicable to, every one who will accept it.

Then will follow restitution, as pictured in verses 25 and 26. Physically, these for whom the Mediator stands shall be restored to a perennial youth, in which death and decay will find no place. They shall find acceptance and communion with God in joy and peace; and he will restore them to the original perfection, lost through sin in Eden. But an acknowledgment that God is just, and that the restitution was unmerited will be required. This is indicated by verses 27, 28: "He will chant it before men, and say: I have sinned and perverted the right; and it was not requited me. He has redeemed my soul from going into the pit and my life that it may be brought to the light."

Elihu's words were as wise as any of those spoken by Job's comforters—probably wiser; but they were merely human wisdom, so far as we can discern. In Chapter 34:29 he asks the

question, "When he [Jehovah] giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?" Evidently the young man sought to draw a line in the criticism of Job, agreeing with neither Job nor his friends, but endeavoring to be moderate in his position. He defended the Almighty, claiming that if God had not so ordered, Job's adversities could not have come upon him.

To Elihu it seemed clear that God had a hand in Job's experiences. Satan could not have sent all these calamities unless God had permitted it. Neither man nor angel of whatever rank could thwart the divine will. God, not Job, had the authority to decide what should be done. God alone had the right to order all of life's affairs. Incidentally Elihu showed that Job was more righteous than were his friends; and that while he was imperfect, like all, yet he was not being punished on this account.

A DIFFICULT LESSON FOR MANY

The Christian may very well draw a lesson from Elihu's question. Although the words are not inspired, yet they are very wise. We can recognize the truth they contain—that when God purposes to give peace, quietness, the whole universe will be in obedience to his laws, and none can make trouble.

If we have difficulties, if we have persecutions, if we have troubles of any kind we should look to God. We should say: This thing could not happen to me unless the Lord permitted it. We have come under special divine care. God has promised that all things shall work together for good to us who are his children. The lesson of trust is one of those difficult lessons for us to learn and apply—to realize that all of life's experiences are under divine supervision and that nothing can happen to us but what is for our highest good. This is not now true of the world, but merely of God's family. By and by God will make all things work out blessings for the world.

It is in respect to those who are his children that all things now work for good. When we are in difficulty, we are to look up in confidence and trust to the Lord. Our heavenly Father wishes us to exercise faith in him. St. Peter tells us that we are "kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation." Therefore we greatly rejoice, even "though now for a season we are in heaviness through manifold trials" and temptations. "The trial of your faith is much more precious than that of gold that perisheth."—1 Peter 1:5-7.

FALSE PEACE OF MANY

There is another way by which some may have quietness. Many in the world enjoy a measure of peace, or rest from worry. Yet they are unaware of the great truths which we enjoy, and are in blindness, ignorance, superstition, error, through Satan's delusions. They have a feeling of security and ease, through the blinding influence of error and falsehood. Those of the world who come into relationship with God, are therefore sometimes awakened from false security. Then they gain the true peace and rest of heart. The Lord says: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." No true rest can be gained otherwise.

The Lord's people have a peace and rest of mind through the knowledge of the Lord's plan, the knowledge of his justice, mercy and love, and a blessed realization that he is our God. All these things give us peace and quiet and rest of mind. While the world are troubled more or less, God's children have a peace that the world knows not of, that the world can neither give nor take away. And when the trials are all over, the Lord will make up for all the troubles of the present time, for all his children have suffered. We shall then look back on these trials and consider them but light afflictions, only for a moment.—2 Corinthians 4:17.

TESTS OF LOYALTY AND DEVOTION

When the Lord permits great clouds of trouble to come upon us, we should first look to see if we can discern any wrong-doing in ourselves which might properly bring chastisement. We should have joy in the Lord. But perhaps we have not been living close enough to the Lord. Yet these clouds of affliction do not necessarily mean that we have not been living close to him, as we have seen in the case of Job.

We remember likewise in the experiences of our Lord Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane the night before his crucifixion,

how he said to his disciples, Peter, James and John, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." We remember that God did not give him quietness, but allowed trouble like a great flood to sweep over his soul. He was troubled to know surely whether he had been entirely loyal, faithful and obedient, as was necessary to maintain the Father's favor. We are told by the Apostle Paul that our Lord Jesus "offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him out of death—and was heard."—Hebrews 5:7.

We find that the Father sent his angel to minister unto his dear Son, in his deep distress. As soon as the angel had given our Lord the assurance of the Father that he was well pleasing in his life and conduct, he became perfectly calm. And the assurance sustained him in all the trying experiences which followed—the trial before the Sanhedrin, before Pilate, the treatment of the soldiers, the journey on the way to Calvary, and in the midst of the trying process of execution which followed.

Only at the last, when the Father, because Jesus must take the sinner's place, withdrew his presence from him in his dying moment did our Lord manifest disturbance of mind. Then he cried out in agony of soul, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It was necessary for our Lord to experience the entire cutting off from God and from all relationship to God, in order to pay the full penalty for Adam's sin. This experience was at the very last moment. The heavenly Father permitted this, for it was necessary to our Lord that he should realize the meaning of the sinner's separation from God.

We do not consider it necessary that in every case our Lord's true and faithful followers should have a similar experience. We are not, as was our Redeemer, the ransom, the Sin-bearer for the world; but it would not be surprising if some may have similar experiences to those of our Lord. Some of the saints have died, exclaiming: "I am sweeping through the gates of the New Jerusalem!" while others have had dying experiences more like those of our Lord, and have cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

We can be content to leave our experiences entirely in the hands of him who loves us, and can have an inward peace and calm and a rest of soul, knowing that no outward storm will be permitted but such as the Father sees will bring forth in us the peaceable fruits of righteousness, if we are properly exercised thereby.

RESTITUTION FOR MANKIND PICTURED

In the concluding chapters of the Book of Job, Jehovah addresses his afflicted servant, reproving his temerity in attempting, with his little knowledge, to judge God. This Job acknowledges, and finds peace in trusting God. Job's three friends, however, are severely reproved by God. But when they obey God and go to Job and offer up for themselves a burnt offering according to the Lord's commandment, and Job prays for them as God further instructed, they are restored to divine favor. At once Job's prosperity returns—his friends and influence are restored; his wealth was exactly doubled, for he had twice as many flocks and herds and camels. He had also the same number of sons and daughters as before, and the Scriptures note that there were "no women found so fair as the daughters of Job."

This ending of Job's career with a general restitution is incomprehensible to those who have never seen that the plan of God in Christ provides for a "time of restitution" of all things lost in Adam, to all of his race who will accept them under the terms of the New Covenant. (Acts 3:19-21) But those who do see this plan of God can readily see, too, that Job's experience was not only actual, but also typical. He seems to represent mankind. Man was at first in the divine likeness and favor, with all things subject to him. (Psalm 8:4-8) Because of Adam's sin Satan obtained an influence in human affairs which has resulted in degradation, sickness and death. God, however, has never really forsaken his creatures, and is even now waiting to be gracious unto all in and through Christ Jesus our Lord.

ENDURING HARDNESS AS GOOD SOLDIERS

"Thou, therefore, endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."—2 Tim. 2:3.

There are many illustrations used in the Bible, and all of them very forceful. The one which represents the Christian as a soldier, has a great deal of meaning. We are not to suppose that the angels in heaven are soldiers, nor that that term would be applicable to them. There is no war going on in heaven, but there is a war going on here on earth.

Six thousand years ago our first parents became entrapped, and the whole race was sold under Sin—became the servants of Sin and Satan. More and more this influence has prevailed

—not that all willingly surrender to Satan, but that he puts darkness for light and light for darkness, and thus deceives mankind and leads them captive at his will.

All who desire to be in harmony with God would be out of harmony with Satan and sin. And they might at times have resisted these, and have tried to do God's will. But there was no organized undertaking for the overthrow of sin until Jesus came. His mission was to overcome Satan, overcome sin, and to bring everything into full harmony with God's arrangement.

Earth, this province of God's great empire, being in a rebellious state, needed to be conquered and restored, and Jesus undertook the work, with divine backing.

The first step was laying down his own life as a ransom-price for the sin of the whole world, and thus making good for the original transgression. But before taking his power and exercising it in the overthrow of Satan and sin, Jesus, according to the Father's will, began the selection of a church class, variously styled members of his body, his bride, his companions and brethren in the kingdom, his royal priesthood, under himself as the great royal High Priest. All those who have heard the message, and whose hearts have been responsive, who have recognized the wrong conditions here prevailing, and who have felt sympathy for the race that is here sold as slaves of Sin and Death—all these have been invited to become members of this select class.

TERMS OF WARFARE STATED AT BEGINNING

These were informed at the very beginning that it would be necessary for them to fight a good fight. They were invited to enlist in the army to battle against Satan, and instructed that they should have full confidence that ultimately faith would have its victory. They were also told that they must suffer, laying down their lives as their Head and Forerunner laid down his life—not living for the world, but contrariwise, accepting his arrangement and living altogether for the purpose of carrying out their consecration with him.

The final honor to which God has invited them is to a share in his great kingdom, with his Son. This implies a change of nature to all who have become soldiers of the cross, followers of the Lamb; for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." These are called to forego the rights and privileges of the present time, and by their lives to leave their mark, for a testimony to the world, for the benefit of mankind, and especially for the glory of God and for the calling out of others who might desire similarly to walk in the narrow way.

The warfare that these are called upon to wage is a warfare against sin and the powers of darkness. (Eph. 6:11) They are pledged to the Lord for right, for truth, for goodness. They are thus to fight the good fight. These soldiers will find, too, that some of their greatest difficulties are right in their own person. They have tendencies toward sin, because of being members of the human family, children of wrath, of sin, even as others. Their relationship to the Lord is as new creatures.

SELF OUR SPECIAL FOE

The new creature is obliged to fight against and to control the flesh. This is a great battle which each fights for himself. Each soldier may more or less assist and set an example to

the other soldiers, but the chief battle is with himself. It is a hand-to-hand conflict. Although he is expected at all times to be on the alert against the wiles of Satan and the world, yet his special fight is with the enemies in his own flesh. St. Paul himself had taken the shield of faith—wherewith to quench the fiery darts of the wicked—and the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God. Timothy was a young soldier, and the Apostle was encouraging him with advice. He had already come into the Lord's company, under the Lord's standard.

THE QUALITIES OF A GOOD SOLDIER

St. Paul intimates that any one of us may be a good soldier, or contrariwise, a bad soldier, a poor soldier. We can imagine some soldiers who would be very disregarding of orders, not prompt to obey the command of the Leader. We can see that a good soldier is (1) one who is very much in sympathy with the Captain of his salvation. He is an intelligent soldier, and sees that he has on the proper armor, that he wears it properly and that he gets the very best possible use out of this armor. He sees that in his walk he has a soldierly bearing, as a proper representative of the King, and of the great kingdom so near at hand.

(2) He is not ashamed of his flag, nor of the garment of Christ's righteousness. He is to lift up the standard of righteousness everywhere. He enlists in this warfare, knowing that it means his death—the death of the flesh, of the human nature. He is to be a good soldier—not merely outwardly loyal, merely wearing the uniform, but having the full spirit of the cause. This means that whatever experiences come to him he is to receive these thankfully, and be glad to have the privilege of enduring something for his Captain and in the interests of the kingdom to which he has sworn allegiance.

The thought which the Apostle is impressing is that all good soldiers should endure hardness—hard, distressing conditions, circumstances that are quite unpleasant, difficult. Earthly soldiers are obliged to tramp through water and mud, enduring long, wearisome marches. Sometimes they are short of rations, sometimes obliged to sleep on the ground. Sometimes their battles are waged in the face of great opposition.

So the soldier of Christ is to endure whatever experiences may come to him, under the guidance of his Captain, not only willingly, but gladly, rejoicing that he has been permitted to enter this army of the Lord, knowing that these experiences are working out for him "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." These various hard experiences of the Christian are designed to work out for his good, that he may "lay hold on eternal life," and gain a share in the kingdom with his Redeemer.

CARELESS LIVING A FORM OF PROFANITY

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."—Exodus 20:7.

This command was not given to the Gentiles; for the Lord had no dealings with the world. It was given to the Jewish people, who had come into relationship with God through the Law Covenant. We have every reason to believe that many of the Jews tried very hard outwardly to keep the Ten Commandments, the keeping of which meant life, the failure to keep which meant death. All of their endeavors failed, and they continued to die.—Romans 7:10.

Notwithstanding the endeavor of many to observe this command of our text, St. Paul declared respecting them that the name of God was blasphemed through them amongst the Gentiles. (Romans 2:24) We cannot suppose that the grosser meaning of blasphemy was the Apostle's thought. Blasphemy was a terrible thing among the Jews. Even a parent who heard his own child blaspheme was instructed to stone that child to death for so doing. We suppose the Apostle meant that the kind of living practised among the Jews really blasphemed God's name before the world. They were professedly God's people. And if under divine instruction, divine care, and divine recognition, they did the things dishonoring to God, they were blaspheming his name.

While the Ten Commandments were not given to the church, yet every feature of the Ten Commandments is a command; for by the character of our consecration we are bound to seek to know God's will, even beyond the mere letter of his Word. Hence, while the church is not under the Law Covenant, we are under the general instruction of the Ten Commandments. Therefore the Apostle says that "the righteousness of the law [the true meaning of the law] is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit."—Romans 8:4.

It is not supposable that any real child of God, any consecrated follower of Christ, could have a desire to take the name of the Father in vain. Hence the apparent meaning of this command is not applicable to us; for since we have become his

children, and have received his spirit, it would be the farthest thing from us to wish to profane his name. But as the Jews profane the name of the Lord by careless living amongst the Gentiles, so there is a great danger of Christians profaning his name by careless living. And this is indicated in the Scriptures as being a danger.

Our Lord speaks of some who, at his second coming, will say, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful works, and in thy name cast out devils?" And he will say, "I do not recognize you." They have been deceiving themselves. (Matthew 7:21-23) They did not come in by the door of the sheep-fold, and have never been recognized by the Lord as his sheep. Amongst them there will perhaps be a great many who have done philanthropic and reform work.

But the thousand years of Christ's reign will be the time when God will institute the real reform work, through Christ's kingdom. Now the Lord is working in the hearts of his people, through his promises, seeking the particular class who are moved and exercised by these promises. Thus he is finding a little flock, a peculiar people, to be joint-heirs with Christ in his kingdom.

LET US TAKE NOT HIS NAME IN VAIN

From this standpoint, all of God's people should be very much on guard that they do not take the name of the Lord in vain when they profess to be his people, his children—when they profess to be the followers of Jesus and call themselves Christians. It would be far better if many professed Christians did not take the name of Christian at all. The only ones who may properly take Christ's name are those who really become his disciples. The only condition under which any may become his disciple is to take up his cross and follow him—give up his life, surrender his will.

Although this commandment was not given to spiritual

Israel, we can readily see how the spirit of it applies to us. We have taken the name of Christ as our name. We profess to be members of the body of Christ. And the holy name of the Head belongs to all the members of his body. The honored name of the Bridegroom belongs to his espoused. What carefulness the thought of this should give us, and how appropriate it is that we should see to it that we have not taken that blessed name in vain; that we appreciate the honor, the dignity, the responsibility, of our position as his representatives and am-

bassadors in the world! Let us, therefore, walk circumspectly, taking earnest heed that we bring no dishonor to that hallowed name; but on the contrary, that we honor it in our every thought and word and deed.

"What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation [behavior] and godliness." "As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation [behavior]; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." —2 Peter 3:11; 1 Peter 1:15, 16.

LAWFUL ON THE SABBATH

MARCH 15.—Luke 13:10-17; 14:1-6.

"The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."—Mark 2:27.

Much confusion prevails amongst Christian people respecting the Sabbath day. One fruitful source of this confusion is that few realize that God's arrangements with the followers of Jesus are totally different from those which he made with natural Israel under the Law Covenant. Everything under that covenant was a type and contained a valuable lesson for Christians, but to mistake the type for the antitype is to confuse our minds and to miss the beauty and force of the antitype.

There was no Sabbath day before the Jewish law, except in the sense that the word Sabbath signifies rest, and that we are informed that God rested on the seventh great day, or epoch, of the creative week. Enoch, who walked with God; Abraham, the friend of God, and others pleasing to the Lord, knew nothing about the Sabbath, even as they knew nothing about the Atonement Day and its sacrifices, or other matters appertaining to Israel's Law Covenant.

The Apostle Paul explains that the Israelites were a house of servants, under Moses; but that the church is a house of sons, under Christ. (Hebrews 3:1-6) God's method of dealing with the house of servants would very properly be different from his method of dealing with the house of sons. Commands are given to the servants without explanation why or wherefore. But the Apostle explains that God deals with us as with sons. To the true Christian the heavenly Father makes known his plans, his purposes, his arrangements, in order that his sons, who have his spirit, may sympathetically enter into those plans, by obedience to the extent of self-sacrifice, not because of command, but because of joy to do the Father's will.

Jesus and the apostles were Jews, and were under obligation to the Law Covenant up to the time that Jesus by his death became the "end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Since that time the followers of Jesus are in no sense of the word bound by the Jewish law. They are interested in the Ten Commandments, because those commandments in an outward way indicate the will of God; and all the sons of God are anxious to know the Father's will, that they may voluntarily do it. But God does not address the house of sons, "Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not steal"; for so surely as they have been begotten of the holy Spirit at all, they will not wish to kill, nor wish to steal.

In dealing with the house of sons God, through the Head of the house, has set up a new law, which is all-comprehensive and means much more than the law of Moses was previously understood to signify. It is the law of love. As the Apostle declares, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." The law is comprehended in the one word love—love supreme for God, and love for our fellow men. Finally, Jesus declared, "A new command I give unto you, That ye love one another as I have loved you." This he said to us who are laying down our lives one for the other.

SEVENTH DAY—FIRST DAY

Early in the Gospel dispensation the followers of Jesus began to meet on the first day of the week. Apparently the custom had its start in the fact that Jesus rose from the dead on that day, and appeared several times on that day to his followers; and on the following first day of the week he appeared again. It became a custom amongst the disciples to have their fellowship on that day, not that it was commanded of the Lord, but because of their desire to remember the Master and to have fellowship with each other. Quite probably they kept the Sabbath day and the first day as well, for a time. They evidently had difficulty in realizing how completely they had passed from the domination of Moses and his law to be under the headship of Jesus and his guidance—"the liberty wherewith Christ makes free" indeed.

Although Christians have now abandoned the observance of the seventh day in favor of the first day of the week, many erroneously think that God authorized the change. But not so; the Christian is not under law, but under grace. It was from privilege that the early disciples met together on the first day,

and not by instruction of God. So it should be still, and so it is yet with some. True Christians cannot have too much opportunity for fellowship together for the study of the heavenly Father's Word, and for offering him the worship and homage of their hearts.

True Christians undoubtedly are glad that there is a special day of the week set apart, in which they can more particularly give themselves to prayer, worship, praise and Bible study, and good works—even though the enforcement of such a Sunday be by human law and through a misconception. Glad would many of the Lord's people be if their earthly affairs were so arranged as to permit of two Sundays in each week, or more. But in order to enjoy Sunday properly, the Lord's consecrated people should be freed from the misconceptions which so generally prevail.

THE SABBATH OF REST

Israel's law provided two Sabbaths. One, every seventh year, found its multiple and fulfilment in the fiftieth year, the year of Jubilee and of full release. The other was every seventh day, and found its fulfilment through its multiple, in the fiftieth day—the day of Pentecost—the day which foreshadowed the rest into which the people of God may enter even now.

The Apostle refers to both of these in Hebrews 4:1-11. The Sabbath day has its fulfilment in the rest and peace of heart enjoyed by the antitypical Israelites. It is a perpetual Sabbath with them. They enter into rest. They have reached that place where they have the peace of God ruling in their hearts. They rest from their own works—from all hope that they could commend themselves to God by works of any kind, Sabbath keeping or otherwise. They enter into rest because they see that God has provided in Jesus the help necessary for all, that they are "complete in him." This rest or peace no man taketh from them. It is theirs so long as they abide by faith in Christ, in God.

But, as the Apostle points out, "there remaineth a rest for the people of God"—a future rest. The church will enter into that rest when they experience their resurrection change, when they are made like the Savior and enter into the joys of their Lord. That will be the complete rest. So far as the world is concerned, the great Messiah's reign of a thousand years will be the Sabbath of the world in general, in which they will have the privilege of attaining perfection in every sense of the word and thus will enter into rest by coming into harmony with God.

Jesus did many of his miracles on the Sabbath days, partly no doubt to emphasize the fact that the great Sabbath, the thousand-year day, the seventh thousand-year day of earth's history, will be the time of his kingdom, in which all mankind will be privileged to be healed from sin and sickness, sorrow and pain, and to be brought to the full perfection of human nature, to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed at Calvary.

TO DO GOOD ON THE SABBATH

Since Jesus according to the flesh was a Jew, and therefore bound by all the commandments of the Jewish law, it follows that he could do nothing contrary to that law. He could not set it aside, nor was it proper that he should explain to the Jews the real meaning of the Sabbath. All that would come later, under the holy Spirit's instruction, after Pentecost, after the begetting of the spirit; for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." But Jesus could, and did, correct certain of the misapprehensions of the law which had crept in through the teachings of their rabbis, the Doctors of the Law, and the Pharisees.

These for show exaggerated the letter of the law in some respects, while they entirely ignored its spirit. Thus when the disciples of Jesus, passing through a wheat field, rubbed some of the grains in their hands to hull them before eating, the Pharisees complained that they were breaking the Sabbath—they were threshing and winnowing. Jesus showed that this was not the purport of the law. It was not made to hinder any good or necessary work, but to benefit the people. According to the Doctors of the Law, to search for a biting flea

would be sin on the Sabbath day, because it would be "hunting." Thus in various ways they made the reasonable law of God to appear unreasonable to the people; and while thus particular in trifles, they ignored the weightier matters of the law, which appertained to justice, love and mercy.

In the lesson before us we have two instances of healing on the Sabbath. A woman had an infirmity which had bowed her down for eighteen years. Jesus released her from her bondage on a Sabbath day. He laid his hands upon her and said, "Thou art loosed from thine infirmity"; and she was made straight and glorified God. But the ruler of the synagogue was indignant and said unto the people, There are six days in which you can come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day.

This was intended as a special rebuke to Jesus, intimating that he was not so holy and so careful of the Sabbath as he should be, but was a violator of the law. But Jesus replied: "Ye hypocrites! doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to water? and ought not this woman, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bondage on the Sabbath day?" And his adversaries were put to shame.

PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM

MARCH 22.—Luke 13:18-30.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."—Matthew 7:21.

Few apparently have noticed that nearly all of Jesus' teachings related to the kingdom of God. This was because the kingdom of God is the great divine remedy promised for the release of mankind from the curse, and the blessing of the willing and obedient with an uplift out of sin and death conditions, a return to harmony with God and the everlasting life which he is pleased to give to all who love him. All that took place in the world prior to the coming of Jesus was merely preparatory. Life and immortality had not even been brought to light before the first advent. Thus we read, "Christ hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." There were hints, suggestions and promises of coming blessings; but the method of procedure, etc., was not brought to light.

The typical sacrifices of Israel taught a great lesson; viz., that better sacrifices must be offered before the blessings could be received. The typical kingdom of Israel taught that Messiah would be a great King, and rule with great power. But when the last of the kings of David's line, Zedekiah, was dethroned, the Lord through the Prophet declared, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: until he come whose right it is; and I will give it unto him."—Ezekiel 21:25-27.

The work of Jesus at his first advent, his sacrificial death as an atonement for man's sin, was necessary as the foundation or preliminary to the setting up of God's kingdom for man's deliverance from the power of sin and death. But, although the Redeemer died eighteen centuries ago, the kingdom is not yet set up. We are still praying, "Thy kingdom come." Nevertheless, when enlightened by the words of our Lord and the apostles, we see that the divine program has not stopped. An elect church is being sought, which is to be the bride of Christ and his joint-heir in his kingdom, and not until this great work shall have been accomplished can the kingdom come. After the full number of his elect church shall have been perfected in the first resurrection, they shall reign with him, as he promised—"a royal priesthood"; "kings and priests unto God."

There should be no doubt that these features of the plan of God constitute quite sufficient reasons why the Savior should preach and teach so much respecting the kingdom. The different parables illustrative of the kingdom treat it from different standpoints, just as we might take different photographs of persons or of a building, or of the same person or thing at different ages or stages of development or from different angles. So some of the parables of the kingdom tell about the persecutions which would come upon those who would be the heirs of the kingdom. Others tell that there would be a great outward appearance of prosperity, while the true kingdom class would be still a little flock.

One parable at least tells about the future work of the kingdom, after the Church is completed and sits with Christ in his throne. This is the parable of the Sheep and the Goats, which has its fulfilment positively dated by the expression, "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them the one from the other, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats."—Matthew 25:31, 32.

The other case was that of a man troubled with dropsy. Jesus, knowing their attitude of mind, discussed the subject in advance on this occasion, asking the Doctors of the Law and the Pharisees, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day or not?" They made no answer. Then he took the sick man and healed him, and inquired of the critics, "Which of you having an ass or an ox fall into a pit would not straightway draw him out on a Sabbath day?" But they could not answer.

A proper understanding of the Sabbath, the rest which God has provided for his people, is a great blessing. "We who believe do enter into rest"—an abiding rest, a perpetual Sabbath. And all such are glad to have special opportunities, as these may present themselves, for gathering together in the name of the Lord, for worship, praise, study and fellowship. Without regard to which day, the Apostle suggests to us, Let us forsake not the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is; and so much the more, as we see the day drawing on—the glorious day of Messiah's kingdom approaching, and the shadows of night and darkness, of ignorance and superstition passing away.—Heb. 10:25.

This dividing of the world, the Gentiles, will progress for a thousand years, and eventually will make a most complete separation, identifying the sheep of the Lord's favor and introducing them to the blessings intended for them, and destroying the goat class as being really servants of sin and of Satan. These will go away into everlasting punishment, symbolized by fire. The punishment will be everlasting, even though they will be unconscious; for "the wages of sin is death," not torment. Therefore the everlasting punishment will be an everlasting death, from which there will be no redemption, no future recovery.

A GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED

Two illustrations of the kingdom occur in this lesson. In the one the Lord likens the kingdom to a grain of mustard seed, which from a small beginning would become quite a large bush, and the birds of the air would lodge in its branches. This evidently was intended as a picture of the outward appearance of the church—very prosperous, so prosperous as to invite the birds. Elsewhere Jesus declared that the birds represented the wicked one and his agents, ever ready to take away the seed of truth and to work adversely as respects the Gospel program. (Matthew 13:4, 19) In Revelation also the great Teacher speaks of the church as becoming Babylon, confusion, and as being "a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." (Revelation 18:2) The picture fits.

Again the Master illustrated the experiences of his church as an embryotic kingdom. His second parable tells of a woman who hid some leaven in three measures of meal until the whole batch was leavened. This, Bible students are coming to understand, signifies a corrupting of the divine message—the spiritual food which God had prepared for the church. A woman in symbolic language represents a church system; and the Master tells us that such a church system will mix leaven, or ferment, in the food of the family of God until the whole mass will be corrupted. For he it noted that leaven in the Bible is always used as a symbol of corruption, of sin. This parable shows that the faith once delivered to the saints would be lost, vitiated, mixed with error, until it would no longer be nourishing to the family. St. Paul pictures the same matter, saying that in the latter days "some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons."—1 Timothy 4:1.

These false doctrines are what are troubling the people of God today. Our hearts are better than our heads; for the hearts of the consecrated are in tune with the Infinite One, while the creeds of the dark ages are quite out of tune. The blessings that are lately coming to Bible students are largely the result of breaking loose from the creeds formulated in the dark ages, and getting back to the teachings of Jesus, the apostles and the prophets—the only inspired authorities. Their words alone constitute the proper food whereby we are to be nourished. The Word of God is sufficient, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished.—2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

Some dear Christian people, looking at matters evidently from a wrong angle, are still deceived into thinking that it is possible for the church, as the kingdom of God in an embryotic condition, to do the work which God assigns to that church in her future glorified, perfected condition. Such shut their eyes to the fact that the number of heathen in proportion to the

number of Christians doubles every century. Such try to count up Christians by the hundreds of millions, entirely ignoring the fact that Jesus has declared that the Gospel church, the elect, who are walking in his steps, will be altogether but a little flock.—Luke 12:32.

THE CALLED SAVED

The blessing of the heathen is not merely for those now living, but for all who have ever lived. Messiah's kingdom will triumph gloriously in the Lord's due time. The knowledge of the glory of God will fill the whole earth (Isaiah 11:9), until none shall need to say to his neighbor or to his brother, Know thou the Lord; for all shall know him. (Jeremiah 31:33, 34) It is in order that all may come to a knowledge of the truth that God has promised that "there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust"; that "all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and shall come forth." A faithful few will come forth to glory, honor, immortality and a share in the kingdom; and the unreconciled many will come forth later, that the love of God may be testified to them, and that they may have the opportunity of the rewards and chastisements of the kingdom, to help them back to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed at Calvary.

Some inquired of the Lord, Will there be but few saved? Jesus did not give a direct answer to the question, doubtless for two reasons: (1) The holy Spirit had not yet come, and his followers could not then be prepared to understand the plan of God thoroughly. (2) It was not due time to explain all the particulars of the spiritual salvation of the church, to be like unto her Lord, and then later the human restitution of the world to the image and likeness of the first Adam. Jesus applied the matter to his hearers personally, saying: "Strive ye to enter in [to the kingdom] by the narrow door; for many, I say unto you will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the Master of the house is risen up and shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, open unto us, he shall answer and say to you, I know you not whence ye are."

For a certain period of time the door to the high calling of the church stands ajar. Jesus opened up his new way of life through the veil; that is to say, his flesh—his sacrifice. (He-

brews 10:19, 20) The possibilities of entering into this way were first presented to the Jews; and after finding the suitable ones of that people, God has directed the message hither and thither amongst the Gentiles for these more than eighteen centuries. Apparently the gathering of the elect has been nearly completed. As soon as the last one completing the elect number shall have qualified for glory and shall have passed through the door, it will shut.

About that time, a great awakening of religious thought will come to the world, in the midst of a great time of trouble. Then many will begin to say that they have been neglecting the great prize, that they have failed to purchase the pearl of great price on the cheap terms on which it was offered to them—their little all. Then there will be great lamentation amongst this class, and a crying, Lord, Lord, are we not to be of the bride class? But the Lord will disown them as respects the bride company. Then they will be in great sorrow. Weeping and gnashing of teeth will prevail. This will not be in some far-off place of eternal torment, as once we supposed; but, as the narrative intimates, it will be right here on the earth, amongst a class who neglected the privileges of the high calling when they knew of it.

Bringing the matter down to his hearers, but still leaving it applicable to all who have heard the message throughout the Gospel age, the Lord intimates that some of these will have been in close touch with him and his followers. They had a form of godliness and claimed to have done many mighty works, yet the Lord will disown them as respects any privileges in the kingdom. They will not even have a share in the earthly kingdom. It will be given to the worthies of the past who lived and died before the high calling was opened up.

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the prophets and faithful ones of the past are to be princes in all the earth, the visible representatives of the invisible Messiah and his church in glory. The heirs of the kingdom will not be entirely Jewish, because the Jews as a nation were not sufficiently holy and because the Lord could accept only the holy. When the call to joint-heirship in the kingdom would go out to the Gentiles, some would come from the East, the West, the North and the South, and have a share in the kingdom. The Jews were first in God's favor and the Gentiles last; yet some of the first with privilege and opportunity would fail.

WHAT DOTTH JEHOVAH REQUIRE?

MARCH 29.—Matthew 7:24-29.

"What doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?"—Micah 6:8.

Jesus sought to impress upon his hearers that it was not sufficient for them to hear that a kingdom of God was coming, and that it would bring certain blessings to the world. It was not sufficient that they should know that a kingdom class was being called out of the world to be Messiah's joint-heirs in that kingdom. Action would be necessary on their part if they would attain to this high privilege which God had granted to them. "Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works," wrote St. James. Not that we are to attain the kingdom by our works; for, imperfect through the fall, we are unable to do perfect works, acceptable to God. It will be our faith in God and in the Lord Jesus that will bring us the victory, if we gain it; but the victory will be accounted only to those who shall, to the best of their ability, work out their salvation with fear and trembling. God will work in such, and through Christ bring them off conquerors, yea, more than conquerors.

Jesus gave an illustration, or parable, declaring that those who heard his message and rendered obedience thereto would be like a wise man, who built his house upon the rock, where the descending rains would not wash away the foundation from underneath, nor in any wise harm it. The storms of life are sure to come; and the great crisis of life, death, is sure to come. Amidst those trials there will be calmness, confidence and security for such as have accepted the Lord's arrangement and have been walking to the best of their ability in the footsteps of Jesus. To them death will be merely a transition from the earthly state to the heavenly, by the power of the first resurrection—"changed in a moment in the twinkling of an eye"; for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Corinthians 15:50-52) Their faith and confidence, built upon God's promises, can never fail them. For such there is laid up a crown of life, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give them at that day.—2 Timothy 4:8.

On the other hand, Jesus intimates that many who heard his words and expressed great appreciation of them, would fail to take the proper steps to attain the glorious kingdom privileges which he presented. They would allow custom, habit,

love of pleasure, love of ease, the spirit of the world, to hinder them, either from making the proper, full devotion of themselves to God, or from carrying out that purpose. Such indeed might to some extent encourage themselves with hopes of the kingdom which would never be realized, because they never took the proper steps. They did not build their faith upon the proper foundation. Perhaps some of them built upon the law, and thought that they could commend themselves to God by their own endeavors, without the imputation of the merit of Christ. Such would be greatly mistaken. His death is our redemption-price, and his appearance in glory as our Advocate is to make good for our unintentional shortcomings.

With all such, the day of stress and trial will surely come; and their faith structure, being without a proper foundation, will give way. They will suffer the loss of all their hopes. This, however, does not signify, as many of us once supposed, that they will go to eternal torment. Evidently nearly all Christian people, misled by the creeds of the dark ages, read into the Word of God many things which it does not at all contain.

COMPARE ST. PAUL'S PARABLE

The Apostle Paul used a similar illustration, saying, "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid—Jesus Christ." "But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon"; for the day that cometh shall try every man's work of what sort it is. Those building with the gold, silver and precious stones of divine truth, developing their faith and character in harmony with the divine requirements and arrangements, will suffer no loss in the great trial day at the end of this age. But others who build with the wood, hay and stubble of human tradition and self-complacency, will find that their entire faith structure will be consumed; for the fire of that day shall try every man's work of what sort it is.—1 Corinthians 3:10-15.

Nevertheless, the Apostle tells us that even those who will suffer the loss of their faith structure, if they have built upon Christ, will themselves be saved, though so as by fire. They will be what is sometimes termed a tribulation class, described

in Revelation 7:14-17: "These are they that have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him in his temple day and night." On these, God has various blessings to bestow. These will be in proportion to their obedience and loyalty and faith.

The class that the Apostle mentions as building with gold, silver and precious stones, will be a little flock, a royal priesthood, who will sit in the throne, wearing the crowns, and be joint-heirs with Jesus in the kingdom. But the class building upon the rock without proper materials, yet saved so as by fire, will be the great company class, the antitype of the Levites, who instead of being in the throne, will before the throne serve those in the throne; instead of wearing crowns, they will be granted palm branches, indicating a victory of an inferior kind. The priestly class will be the antitypical temple of God; the Levite class, the great company, will serve God in and through that temple class.

Nor is this all the salvation which God has purposed. These two classes include merely the spirit-begotten ones of this Gospel age. The ancient worthies are to constitute another class of saved ones—saved to an earthly perfection, to be princes in all the earth, glorious representatives of the invisible, spiritual, heavenly kingdom class. Then finally will come the blessing of all the families of the earth who shall prove willing and obedient during the thousand years of the kingdom reign, and who will be gradually lifted up, up, out of sin and degradation, by resurrection power, back to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed through the precious blood of Jesus. On the other hand, all intelligent, wilful opposers of God and righteousness, after a certain period of opportunity, will be destroyed in the second death—whether they belong to the class that is now on trial, a class of spirit-begotten ones, or to the class which will be on trial during the period of Messiah's reign. "All the wicked will God destroy."

THE PEOPLE WERE ASTONISHED

No wonder the people were astonished at such doctrines as Jesus gave forth, even though they but imperfectly understood these, for none could perfectly understand except through the enlightening influence of the holy Spirit, which was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified. (John 7:39) The teachings of Jesus had a positiveness quite different from the various speculations and wonderings of the scribes. So it is always with the truth. Wherever there is confusion and mysticism, we may be sure there is error and ignorance. Hence the necessity that all who preach Christ should have the anointing, or ordination, to preach, which God alone gives through the begetting of the holy Spirit.

OUR GOLDEN TEXT

"What doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?" At first one might be inclined to say, Why, that is different! There

is nothing in the text of Scripture to say that in order to be an heir of the kingdom one must take up his cross, deny himself and follow in the footsteps of Jesus, self-sacrificingly!

This is true; but we should notice that the one is a requirement and the other a privilege. God does not require sacrifice. What he requires is loyalty and obedience, but not sacrifice. Whatever is sacrificial is so much more than the divine law requires. Thus in the case of Jesus, the divine law could not require him to do more than to obey it—to love God with all his heart, mind, soul and strength, and to love his neighbor as himself. But could not all this have been done by Jesus without the laying down of his life at all! Surely! Hence the Scriptures represent that when Jesus presented himself at Jordan, he consecrated all that he had to do the Father's will, even unto death—not merely to keep the law. He delighted to do the Father's will, even beyond what the Father demanded in the law. (Hebrews 10:5-7) And so must it be with all who would be acceptable footstep followers of Jesus and attain with him glory, honor and immortality on the heavenly plane.

The Prophet Micah addressed the Jews, and his message was from the standpoint of the law. He was encouraging the Jews to do their best to fulfil its requirements. Nevertheless, we know that no Jew ever fulfilled the law except Jesus, because all except him were fallen, imperfect. He alone was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners."

During the Millennial kingdom of Messiah, this same law of God, given to the Jews through Moses, will be given to the whole world of mankind through Messiah. The requirements will be to do justly, to love kindness, to walk humbly with God. The reason why Messiah's ministration of this law will be a success, while Moses' ministration of it was a failure, so far as bringing any to perfection was concerned, is that Messiah's kingdom will be fully prepared and authorized to forgive sinners and to help them up out of their imperfections—back to the image and likeness of God as it was originally represented in Father Adam.

The privilege and right to thus forgive sins and to thus lift the sinner out of degradation belong to Messiah, by virtue of his sacrifice for sins which he finished on Calvary. The right to life which he there laid down without forfeiting he will be prepared to give to mankind during the Millennium; and only the wilful rejectors will perish in the second death.

"O! we long to see thy glory
Streaming wide o'er all the earth;
Every error, old and hoary,
Flee to realms that gave them birth.

"For this glorious culmination,
Not for long shall Zion wait:
Soon will come her coronation;
Lo, her King is at the gate."

INTERESTING QUESTIONS

HOW DID SAUL OF TARSUS SEE JESUS?

Question.—"And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of [before the] due time." (1 Cor. 15:8) How could Saul of Tarsus have seen Jesus, if he was personally in heaven, and was to remain there until the end of the age?

Answer.—The Lord evidently designed that Saul should have the opportunity of being the twelfth apostle, to take the place of Judas. In order to be an apostle, it was necessary that he should be a witness to our Lord's resurrection. And so Saul of Tarsus was given a demonstration which made him an eye witness to the fact of the Lord's resurrection from the dead. He tells of it in this way: after detailing how Jesus had been seen of above five hundred brethren at one time, St. Paul says, "And last of all, he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time."

The miracle that was performed to enable Saul to see Jesus was not sufficient to save his eyes. If Jesus had been a flesh being, Saul's eyes would have been spared. But the fact that he was permitted to see, and with unveiled eyes (for it is not the natural order of things for a natural eye to see a spirit being), is a proof that some power was miraculously exercised which enabled him to see the Lord.

As to how this comports with the thought that Jesus went away, and that the heavens were to retain him until the end of the age, we have this to say: He left the world, telling his disciples that in the end of the age he would come in great glory to establish his kingdom. But nothing in this statement indicates that he might not be present at some time previous to this. This may be illustrated in the typical Atonement Day sacrifices. The high priest went into the Most Holy and offered

the blood of the bullock; then he came out again and offered his second sacrifice, the goat. He then returned to the Most Holy.

"SITTING ON THE RIGHT HAND" A FIGURE

The Lord came to earth and was present among men. He finished the work that he had to do here. Then he ascended and appeared in the presence of God (the antitypical Most Holy) to make an appropriation of his merit (the blood of the antitypical bullock) on our behalf. We read that, having finished this work, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, until the time should come when the kingdom would be delivered over to him, and his enemies would be made his footstool. But the words sat down do not mean that he sat down on a literal seat, and has remained inactive during this age. The thought is that he was seated at the Father's right hand in the sense of being given this permanent position of honor, dignity.

The Scriptures declare that at his second coming, our Lord will be seen "sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." (Matt. 26:64) We understand, then, that it was in the official sense that he left the earth for the entire Gospel age, giving up all work as a man—and all work directly for mankind, until the close of the age. But he appeared to Saul, to enable him (as before stated) to be the twelfth apostle, in order to fulfil the Scripture statements concerning Judas. (Psa. 109:7, 8; Acts 1:15-20) This seems to have been an exceptional matter; for the power of the holy Spirit was to operate in the world during this Gospel age. We understand that Saul of Tarsus had only a momentary glimpse of our Lord.

GIVING COUNSEL TO ONE IN TROUBLE

Question.—If a person in deep distress of mind should appeal to us for counsel, should we refuse to listen lest we thereby be hearing evil or evil speaking of another?

Answer.—We should not refuse to hear one who is in deep distress of mind and who comes to us for counsel. But we should suggest to the one in trouble, Now perhaps there is something about this matter which might be a reflection upon another. Perhaps you can state the trouble in such a way as not to tell me the name, and without even describing the person, so that I would be able to recognize him from the description. Thus, too, I might be able to give unbiased advice. If we found that another was involved, we would inquire, Have you fulfilled the requirements of Matt. 18:15? Have you spoken to the person?

If he answers in the affirmative, we should ask, And it makes no impression? And is he [or she] still continuing the wrongdoing? If he says that the party is not now continuing the wrong, but that he has made no apologies, then we would say, But we cannot require one to apologize. We can merely require him to cease from doing injury. You may be very thankful to the Lord that you have been relieved from the pressure of the trial.

Or the person might tell us that he had taken the Scriptural step, and that the party still continues to do injury. Then we would say, Have you taken the next step—to take two witnesses and go to him? If he says Yes, we would advise, Then just continue to the conclusion. You have done well thus far. If he said that he had taken the two witnesses and they had followed the course laid down in Matt. 18:15 very carefully, and that the injury had been stopped, we would say, Well, then, I would stop also. You have no authority to punish him. That belongs to God.

If the brother should say that he had taken the two parties and had gone to the offender, and that he would not listen to them, and that the wrong still continues, then we would advise that he go to the two and ask them to join him in bringing the matter before the church—preferably one of the two being an elder—for they should go primarily to the elders. If the elders are not such persons that confidence could be placed in them in such a matter, they are not suitable for eldership. And the one who was the elder would be the proper one to bring the matter before the church. Up to this time the case should not be discussed outside of these two witnesses.

THE LORD LOVETH A CHEERFUL GIVER

Question.—“Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there be no gathering when I come.” (1 Cor. 16:2) Does this injunction apply to all the Lord’s people?

Answer.—We understand that the principle applies to all. This is not a law, however. The Apostle did not make laws for the church. He would not have had authority to make laws. He taught that all of the Lord’s people are put on their own responsibility as to the use of the things they have sacrificed to the Lord.

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS**PERSONAL AND CLASS RIGHTS**

Dearly Beloved Pastor:—

I have never thought it wise or expedient to write to you before, except on one occasion, and then only to express my love and to inform you that I had taken the Vow. I feel the same reluctance in writing now, lest I unwisely interfere with your time, but feel that it is the proper thing to do.

For a time some of the brethren have been holding in their homes regular meetings which have not been arranged for by the church. In some cases these meetings are conducted by brethren who are neither elders nor deacons. In other cases, certain deacon brethren in their love and zeal found an opportunity for assisting some beginners, and after a time began holding regular meetings in their interest, confining their meetings to evenings which did not conflict with the regular meetings of the church.

These matters came before the church and were discussed, resulting in the following resolution, which was voted upon and carried:

Resolved—That, while we do not question for one moment the good intentions, love and zeal for the Lord and the brethren, on the part of those who may participate, in our judgment the holding of regular meetings in ———, apart from those arranged by the church as a whole, are not to the spiritual benefit of the church of ———, tending, amongst other things, to prevent amongst the whole body here, that full measure of fellowship which we feel so greatly in need of at the present time.

What God commands is to be esteemed, not as a matter of sacrifice, but of obedience. Under the Jewish law, each of the Lord’s people, each natural Israelite, was directed to give a tithe, a tenth. If he made a hundred dollars a month and gave one tenth of it, it would be ten dollars; if he made fifty dollars a month and gave a tenth of it, it would be five dollars. But the fifty dollars, or the one hundred dollars would include all that he would earn each month—not the net earnings, but the gross earnings.

If out of a hundred dollars the Israelite, after paying his tithe, was obliged to spend forty dollars for rent, ten dollars for gas, thirty dollars for food, ten dollars for himself and ten dollars for his wife, he would be out exactly ten dollars, or he would have to cut off five dollars from his wife’s allowance and five from his own.

But Christians are not compelled to give one tenth. There are some in the Bethel family, however, who are giving one tenth. One of the family recently gave one fifth out of the net. We think a principle is here involved—a principle of sacrifice; and that if we follow the Apostle’s advice, we would lay by something every week or every month to give to some who are in real need, and thus exercise a spirit of benevolence, like our heavenly Father, and that we may be able to have at least a small share in the support of the Lord’s work. We believe that to whatever extent we have this thought before our minds we are likely to have a special blessing. “He that watereth shall be watered also himself.”—Prov. 11:25.

“THE RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH IS OF FAITH”

Question.—“But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven (that is, to bring Christ down from above), or who shall descend into the deep (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead)?” (Romans 10:6, 7) What is meant by one’s descending into the deep, to bring Christ from the dead, and by ascending into heaven to bring him down from above?

Answer.—The Apostle here means that some in his time were doubting and did not believe the message that the Messiah had come. They might have said that Jesus was a wonderful man, and that he did many wonderful works. But they were saying, “We do not believe that he was the Messiah and was put to death and then rose again. If you are willing to say that he was only a good man, we can accept that assertion, and are ready to call ourselves Christians. But harmony with God can be attained only by keeping the law.”

This, the Apostle said, is not the language of faith. The Christian exercises faith in the Gospel message. He does not ask how any one could go to heaven to bring Jesus down to earth, or how any could go down to the grave and bring him up. A Christian will accept the facts as they are. Others are not in the attitude to believe God. The essential features of the Gospel are that Jesus came from above—that he was holy, harmless and undefiled, and gave himself a ransom-price for sinners. God recognized the merit of his work and raised him from the dead, and he ascended on high, there to appear in the presence of God—first for the church class, later for the world. All this the Christian accepts by faith.

Personally, I supported the resolution when it was voted upon. Later, after some misgivings as to whether I had acted wisely, I began giving the matter much prayerful thought, searching through the Towers and the Volumes for all the help I could find. Eventually, I came to the conclusion that so far as I was concerned I had made a mistake, and had participated in a resolution that to my mind has the tendency to interfere with the freedom and liberty of others.

Last night at a regular business session, the matter came up again for discussion, the brethren interested in some of these meetings having addressed a letter to the church, requesting the church to appoint a chairman for their meetings. After three hours’ discussion the matter remains unsettled. And now I find myself confronted with a serious problem, which is giving me much concern. I find myself taking the opposite view from the other elders, and standing alone as an elder in the position I have taken; namely, that the resolution which we passed was unwise and inexpedient, having a tendency to destroy personal liberty, and being specially injurious to some of our brethren.

The position is taken that the passing of this resolution does not tend to bondage nor in any way to interfere with the rights of others. But to me it now appears as being in a measure, “an appearance of evil,” which I desire to avoid, having in my mind this thought, that the good which might be accomplished by the resolution from one standpoint, would be more than offset by the injury it might do from another viewpoint.

I have not been and will not be contentious, but I do want