

to be made fit, to be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light—the divine nature. These chastisements or corrections are in the nature of instructions and tests necessary for our development for the higher plane of life to which we have been called. Our Lord Jesus, for instance, was a son of God, and, if a son, then, as the Apostle says, he was chastened, “for what son is he that the Father chasteneth not? If ye be without chastisement, . . . then are ye bastards and not sons.” (Heb. 12:7, 8) Our Lord Jesus was a true son, and hence had his share of chastisements. “The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed.” (Isa. 53:5) While these chastisements and stripes were necessary for our redemption, they were necessary also to our Lord’s preparation for the high station of glory, honor and immortality to which he was called. Thus we read that “he

learned obedience by the things which he suffered.” (Heb. 5:8) The sufferings or chastisements or corrections were necessary to his glorification. And so it is with us, his brethren: our sins are graciously covered through the merit of his sacrifice; by faith we are accepted as every whit whole, and by faith our sacrifices are accepted, “holy, acceptable unto God.” (Rom. 12:1) Our chastisements, therefore, are not in the nature of penalties for the weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh, which Jesus has graciously covered for us; but our standing as new creatures is on the perfect plane, and the majority, at least, of our chastisements, like those of the Master, our elder Brother, are disciplinary, and to the intent that we may be ultimately complete in him, meet for the “inheritance of the saints in light.”

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

INFANT DAMNATION STILL BELIEVED

The movement for Presbyterian Creed revision, it should be remembered, is amongst those of the Northern Synods only. The Southern Presbyterians constitute a totally separate body of Presbyterians. (There is only *one body* of Christ.) In this connection note the following comment from the columns of the *Southwestern Presbyterian* in criticism of a published communication. The editorial note follows:—

“Note by the Editor in Charge.—The statement in the above communication, that ‘our church as a whole doth verily believe’ that it ‘is taught in God’s Holy Word that all infants dying in infancy were given by the Father to the Son in the councils of the Deity before the foundation of the world, as a part of the reward of his atoning sacrifice,’ is wholly unwarranted. The church’s belief is found, not in the deliverance of one Assembly, but in its Standards alone, and not until these are changed is any one warranted in saying that the church believes in the salvation of all infants dying in infancy. As the Standards are now, they are absolutely silent on that question, because the Scriptures are silent on it. We may hope that it is so, but the Scriptures do not declare it. When the Psalmist says: ‘The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies’ (Psalm 58:3), it does seem to imply the possibility that the children of the wicked perish with their parents.

“But our Standards do neither affirm or deny it. They only affirm, as the Jackson Assembly declares, that the *elect* who die in infancy, ‘are saved in a different manner from adult persons who are capable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word,’ leaving it an open question whether the children of the wicked are saved or not, inasmuch as this is one of the things of which Moses says: ‘The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children, that we may do all the words of this law.’—Deut. 29:30.”

Closely in line with the above is the following from the editorial columns of the *Central Presbyterian*, (Richmond, Va.):—

“Presbyterians are becoming united on the old subject of limitation of the atonement. In relation to the merciful inclination of God, it was unquestionably co-extensive with our race. In relation to his *justice*, it was designed for believers exclusively. The whole trouble has always been due to our incapacity to reconcile the *sentiments* and *purposes* of an infinite being. The Bible does not confound them. It assures us that ‘God does not willingly afflict’ his people, and yet he does afflict them. Of course, he may unwillingly destroy his enemies. But we cannot comprehend such facts, any more than the modes of divine justice.”

These editors, be it remembered, are advanced thinkers, too, as compared with the masses of their readers. How sadly they lack the “key of knowledge!” (Luke 11:52) Referring to the Scripture quotations of the first (Psa. 58:3); how evident it is that it is true—that heredity marks everybody, more or less, from birth! The difficulty is a certain theological theory, which has no Scripture foundation—which claims that every infant is *immortal* and that the present life, long or short, favorable or unfavorable, constitutes the only chance ever to be enjoyed for reforming character and becoming fit for a happy eternity, and hence that children of the wicked, conceived and born in sin and depravity (as are all mankind, more or less), are unprepared for an eternity of bliss, and, hence, must spend that eternity without bliss—in pain and horrors. Grant the false premise and it does not take long to reach this conclusion. But let these same reasonable men rid their minds of

the false premise and go by Scripture alone, and they would have no difficulty in reaching a reasonable and Scriptural view of the subject. They should note that no infants are born immortal, but that the truth is as the Scriptures declare, God “only hath immortality.” Then they will be prepared to see that death does not mean life; and that destroy does not mean preserve: that when God declared, “All the wicked will he *destroy*,” he meant it. When he declared, “The soul that sinneth it shall *die*,” he meant it. The penalty upon father Adam and through him upon all his race is a *death* penalty; and children and all die because of Adam’s sin (Rom. 5:12); and the worst, therefore, that could befall the children of the wicked would be—death.

Now, then, what is the Scriptural hope for the children of the wicked? We answer that it is exactly the same as for the children of the saints, viz., that Christ Jesus our Lord tasted death for every man when he tasted death for Adam; because all were under Adam’s sentence of condemnation to death. It was one man’s sin of disobedience that brought the penalty upon all; and, consequently, the ransom of the one was the ransom of all; as it is written: “He is the propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins [the church’s sins], and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” The children of the wicked were, therefore, redeemed in the most absolute sense;—from the entire condemnation of death. Indeed, none but sinners were redeemed, for “Christ died for the ungodly;”—all are ungodly, all sinners; hence, all *die*, and all need to be redeemed, else they would have no hope of a *resurrection*.

In the Millennium (the resurrection age) infants of believers would have a little the start of infants of unbelievers, in that they will have less depraved organisms when awakened; but under the grand raising-up processes then at work, such disadvantages would soon be overcome, and all will be brought to a full knowledge of the truth and to full opportunities for complete *restitution* (Acts 3:19-23) back to all that was lost by father Adam for himself and all his posterity. In that day it shall no more be a proverb that the fathers ate a sour grape [sin] and all the children’s teeth are set on edge; for then “every man [who shall die] shall die for his own iniquity”—“the soul [person] that sinneth it shall die.”—Ezek. 18:2, 4; Jer. 31:29, 30.

How reasonable are God’s ways! and how plainly they are stated in the Word,—for those who have the eye and ear of faith;—to those who are hearkening to the divine Word rather than to the creeds of the dark ages.

In respect to the second quotation: It shows how confusing and unsatisfactory error is to its warmest votaries. Honest minds and good hearts strive in vain to reconcile the idea of *justice* and *good sentiments* and *purposes* with the creating of millions of creatures, with the foreknowledge that for any cause their existence would be everlasting misery,—torture. The marvel is that intelligent men will stick to such inconsistencies—simply because they are old and hoary. Why is it that they cannot go back to the still older theory of the Bible,—beautiful, simple, reasonable, grand? It is because Satan is blinding them with fear;—fear that good, reasonable, just thoughts toward God and interpretations of his Word are delusions of the adversary? Ah, yes; the Lord foresaw it all, and declares, “Their fear toward me [is not of me; I have neither done nor said anything to merit such sentiments, but] is taught by the precept of men.”—Isa. 29:13.

THE BIBLE DEFENDED BY PROF. G. F. WRIGHT, LL.D.

“Since the Bible is a revelation through the medium of human language it must be interpreted in accordance with accepted literary standards. It is addressed to persons who are

supposed to have ordinary understanding and common sense, and who can justly be expected to give it the treatment which would be considered fair in the interpretation of any other literary document. The interest in the Bible is largely kept up by the fact that it is so varied in form that it never becomes monotonous. We find in it not only history, biography and genealogies, but poetry, parables, fables, highly-wrought rhetorical addresses and appeals and prophetic forecasts of the future.

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE GENERAL

"One of the most important rules of interpretation is that ordinary language should be interpreted according to the known nature of the subject. It is always assumed that the person addressed has a considerable amount of knowledge which can be made the basis of instruction and further enlargement. This can be illustrated by an analysis of almost any sentence which can be written. When, for an example, the word 'Bring' is used, it has a wide latitude of possible meaning, which is limited in each instance by the implied but unexpressed conditions known to the speaker and the person addressed. If it is said, Bring me the book, the book will be brought by main force. If the judge says, Bring in the prisoner, the sheriff will come in with the prisoner walking at his side, impelled only by such show of force as is necessary to overcome the reluctance of the prisoner's will. If a mother says to her son, Bring your friend home with you to tea, he would be a very strange boy who should think that, in order to obey the command, he must take his friend up in his arms and carry him, or gird on a sword and pistol to compel attendance. By a simple invitation he will accomplish the purpose. All the force necessary is that which will accomplish the object.

"No greater mistake can be made in the interpretation of language than always to insist upon the strictly literal or etymological meaning of the words. All language is more or less figurative. Words come to mean what usage and the context put into them and make them mean. For example, the word 'manufacture' literally means made by hand—that being the significance of the Latin words composing it. But now hardly anything is made by hand. Yet we still go on speaking of manufacturing all sorts of goods and wares.

"A hundred years ago the coats we wore were literally manufactured. The wool was shorn from the sheep by hand, and our grandmothers carded it into rolls, spun it into yarn and wove it into cloth by hand. Now, on the contrary, the wool is shorn from sheep's backs in Australia by a machine, and is dumped into steamers by great hoisting apparatus, and unloaded at Liverpool in the same manner, and is thence transported by rail to one end of a great 'manufactory,' so called, where it is delivered over to machinery of various and complicated character, which turns it out at the other end cloth ready made for the tailor. He would be a dull interpreter and a carping critic, who should insist that any one who said that this cloth was manufactured by Jonas Barnes & Co., must be supposed to mean that Jonas Barnes & Co. actually made the cloth by hand. Everybody knows that Jonas Barnes can be correctly said to manufacture all the cloth that comes out of his manufactory, even though he does nothing but sit in his office and issue commands. For it is a well known principle of interpretation that a person is properly said to do whatever he accomplishes by his agents. General Grant captured General Lee at Appomattox, though he did not himself fire a gun, and was far in the rear of the army when the actual capture was made. But he is properly said to have done whatever was accomplished by the army which he directed.

BIBLE LANGUAGE FIGURATIVE

"Applying these and other similar principles to the interpretation of the Bible will at once relieve its writers of a great number of absurd charges of ignorance and inconsistency, and unfold a profound, harmonious and exalted conception of nature which may well command the admiration of all classes who are privileged to read and study it.

"The poetical imagery which describes the attributes and actions of the Creator is so bold and striking that it would seem impossible for any person of common sense to degrade it to the low level of mere literality. When the sacred writer speaks of the Lord as accomplishing something 'by the strength of his right arm,' or of his 'causing his face to shine upon us,' it would seem impossible that any person of ordinary experience in the use of language should insist that these expressions necessarily implied that the Divine Being exists in human form and actually has a face and arms and fingers like a man, even though the Psalmist does speak of the heavens as 'the work of God's fingers.' With equal reason the mere literalist would have to say that the Psalmist thought the Lord had feathers and wings, since it is said that he shall cover those that trust him 'with his feathers,' and shelter them 'under his

wings,' while a little before in this Psalm (Psalm 90) it is represented that the Almighty has a 'shadow' under which his children may abide.

"All this emphasizes the fact that human nature has remained practically unchanged from the beginning. The use of language, which is the most characteristic peculiarity of man, has been practically the same in all ages. In early times, as in the present, men knew how to use figurative and rhetorical language, so as to make it effective, and it is altogether probable that they had that knowledge of the nature of things derived from the ordinary experiences of life, which we call commonsense, and which enabled them to understand that when God is spoken of as their 'Sun' and 'Shield' and 'Strong Tower' the words conveyed an exalted spiritual significance far richer and fuller than their mere literal meaning.

"When, therefore, we approach those portions of the Bible which deal more directly and specifically with the constitution of the universe and the creation of the world, we need not be surprised to find language used in the manner which is fitted to give us a most exalted conception of the significance of the facts without either tying us down to the dull literal meaning of words or necessarily conveying false conceptions to sincere and thoughtful inquirers."

MEANING OF BIG INCREASE IN THE SOCIALIST VOTE

We clip the following extracts from the *Chicago Record-Herald*:—

"No one thing in the recent election attracted more attention than the great increase in the Socialist vote. People of all classes have been asking one another, What does it mean? What was the cause which led 300,000 people to give their votes for the principles of Socialism, and what does it portend for the future? The most diverse interpretations have been put upon it. To some it is a threatened danger, to others a promise of hope. All admit that from now on Socialism will be a factor that must be dealt with in the political struggles of America. A party which holds 300,000 votes and elects five members to the legislature in Montana, and three in Massachusetts, and comes close to election in a large number of other places, and unlike the Populist party and most other so-called minor parties, it shows no tendency to concentration in special localities, and is certain to be a force worthy of consideration.

"This sudden growth does not owe its origin wholly to the active propaganda which has been carried on. On the contrary, the growth of this propaganda is in itself almost as much a sign of the growth of the conditions which produce Socialism as it is the cause of the Socialist vote. . . .

ENTERS TRADES UNIONS

"One of the most striking phases of its recent development has been its sudden growth among the trades unions. Everyone who has paid the slightest attention to events in the labor world must have noticed the marvelous increase in the membership and strength of organized labor. But step by step with this growth in the size and power of the unions has gone a corresponding increase of the Socialist sentiment within those unions. The declaration of the 150,000 members of the American Labor Union for Socialism at their convention in Denver a few months ago and the close vote at the American Federation of Labor at New Orleans much more recently are two instances in point.

"The Socialist party, therefore, arises as a distinctly class party. It does not arise as a result of preaching class hatred, as its enemies would declare, but arises because capitalism has developed class antagonisms. So far from seeking to perpetuate class hatred, the Socialist party is the only party which distinctly sets itself about abolishing the class antagonisms which give rise to class hatred by the only possible means—the abolition of the economic antagonisms from which these classes arise. . . .

GREAT GAINS EXPECTED

"The Socialist party may be expected to make tremendously rapid gains within the next few years because of the fact that the extremely rapid evolution to which reference was previously made has caused the economic development of this country to run far ahead of the propaganda movement of Socialism. The economic development has now made the interest of the mass of workers identical with the aims and objects of the Socialist party. It only remains for the propagandists of Socialism to point out and demonstrate this fact to this mass of workers to secure their support. This it is doing at a very rapid rate. The circulation of its publications is growing at an almost astounding rate, while the number of agitators grows even faster.

"Moreover, there is this which differentiates the Socialist party from every other party, in that practically every member is a propagandist and the work of carrying on campaigns

is not left to the party machine. For these reasons the rapid growth of Socialism in the last election is but a foretaste of what the future will bring forth." *

The German Kaiser has just surrendered to the Agrarian party, and, contrary to his preference, has agreed to a tariff on food;—to escape the Socialist dilemma and preserve the farming element as his friends.

ROMAN CATHOLIC TRIUMPHS

A prominent Protestant writer and church historian, Dr. Kolde, discussing the recent progress of Romanism, in the *Neue Kirchliche Leitschrift* (Leipsic), says:—

"Few people, and only those who study modern facts in the light of church history, have any appreciation of the phenomenal advance made by the Catholic church during the last decades, especially as a power in the political world and in the conquests of new spheres of thought and life. It is by no means a pleasant thing for Protestants to contemplate; but it is an undeniable fact that not since the days of Innocent III. has the papal system unfolded such splendor and power as in the present time. Not the Catholic princes, but rather the Protestant rulers are the ones who are trying to surpass each other in honoring the shrewd sage now occupying the throne in the Vatican, although it is this same sage who has repeatedly called the Reformation a 'pest.'"

"In other respects the church has grown phenomenally. Each year the number of those who swell the ranks of the religious orders grows by the thousands, and in the German empire alone there are now 40,000 of these. Not since the days of the Reformation have these orders, especially of the Jesuits, developed the strength they evince in our days. The Catholics control the parliaments and they make our laws, and in countries like Germany, where church and state are united, they even pass the laws regulating the affairs of the Protestant church. With every day the principle is gaining more and more ground that it is not ability and efficiency, but the attitude toward the Catholic church, that opens the way for candidates for positions in the state service. The statesmen of Europe are largely and in many cases mostly influenced in their international politics by the views that may prevail in the Vatican; and what is more remarkable, that which the ambitious Innocent III. failed to attain, and that against which even Catholic princes and bishops have constantly protested, namely, the assigning of the position of judge on international difficulties to the Pope—this has been first voluntarily yielded to the Vatican by the leading Protestant powers of Europe, Prussia and Germany, the former of these also having been the first to recognize the Curia as a political power on equal footing with other powers, by sending an ambassador to the Vatican."

WHAT JUDGE GROSSCUP SEES

"It is certain that, as never before in our history, there are several millions of men and women brought up in the industrial trades who are now without property interest in the trades they follow. No less a man than Webster said that the freest of governments will not long be acceptable if the tendency of the laws be to create a rapid accumulation of prop-

erty in a few hands, rendering a majority of the population dependent.

"If this be true, it has come about that the same years which brought us riches and greatness as a nation have brought with them an internal disorder, which, if allowed to go on, will endanger the stability of the government itself."—*Judge Grosscup at Lincoln, Neb., Dec. 15, '02.*

DEPICTED HORRORS OF HELL

London, Dec. 7.—A dispatch from Rome to the *Daily Mail* says:—

"A scene, which few who witnessed will ever forget, was enacted at the church of San Carlo Alle Mortelle, in Naples, today. A sermon was preached on 'Hell.' The priest in charge arranged a realistic accompaniment to the preacher's words, and had men concealed in various parts of the church. Some were in the sacristy, some in the confessionals, and others behind the altars. The church was darkened. The preacher depicted in vivid colors the horrors of hell. At proper moments there were flashes of blood-red light, and the concealed men rattled chains, screamed, howled and made other hideous noises, supposed to typify the torture of the damned. The congregation was largely composed of the ignorant and peasant class. They are superstitious to a degree. The performance was entirely too realistic for them.

"Women began to get hysterical, laughed, cried and screamed. Soon the entire congregation was in the throes of abject terror. Men, cowering with fear, ran to the doors, burst them open and fled. Panic then seized all, and a terrific rush was made to the streets. Women and children fainted with fright. Men and women fought like beasts to escape. Many were injured, some seriously. The police were called, but the affair had ended. A police order has been issued preventing any further sermons on 'Hell' with such terrible trimmings."

"THERE WERE GIANTS IN THOSE DAYS"

"Who is J. Pierpont Morgan? He is not only the world's king of finance today, but the greatest financier in all history.

"He has a voice in the control of properties capitalized at \$6,488,500,000—more wealth than was ever before in the hands of one man. This amount is greater by over \$1,000,000,000 than the entire annual revenue of the forty-three principal nations of the world. It is greater by almost \$2,000,000,000 than all the world's gold, coined and uncoined. It is greater by almost \$6,000,000,000 than the gold coin and gold certificates in the United States Treasury, and the amount (\$550,000,000) in that treasury at present is unprecedented.

"As the head of the world-wide transportation trust, with 16 steamship lines and 44 railroad systems, with 300 of the largest steamships and 30,000 passenger and freight trains, the two branches representing a land mileage of 108,500 and a sea tonnage of 12,000,000, he is the grand stage-driver and ferryman of the world.

"He is, says the *World*, the one man on earth whose life has been insured by English investors and speculators for \$2,000,000 who paid therefor a premium of 9 per cent. The same fraternity insured the life of Queen Victoria for \$2,000,000."—*Banking World.*

WITHDRAWAL LETTERS

Those of our friends who have been considering the propriety of their obedience to the call, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4; 2 Cor. 6:17; Psa. 50:5), may be hesitating in the obedience because of uncertainty as to how best to inform their congregational associates of the scriptural reasons for their withdrawal from the nominal system. For the benefit of these, we have on hand in good supply a form of Withdrawal Letter, worded plainly, but kindly, and

well calculated to arouse greater interest in the same precious truths which have made us free with "the liberty wherewith Christ makes us free." The letter is so arranged that the addition of signature and date makes it a personal one to all to whom it is sent. Each member of the congregation should receive one, with one or two appropriate tracts, enclosed in a Missionary Envelope. We are pleased to supply free plenty of these Letters, envelopes and tracts to serve all your friends.

TO FILL A LONG FELT WANT

From time to time friends have enquired whether we supplied stationery suitable for correspondence with other friends. To meet this demand we have prepared and have now in stock a good supply of blue bond letter paper, 8½x11 inches, with

appropriate scriptural heading. This we supply at 25c per lb., postage 15c. extra. A pound contains a little over 100 sheets. With the Missionary Envelopes this will constitute excellent material for correspondence.

"HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD"

1 THESSALONIANS 5:14-28.—JAN. 25.

Our lesson is a summary statement of the proper attitude for the Lord's people to maintain in order that they may grow in grace and through faithfulness finally come off conquerors through their Redeemer. Although addressed to the saints at Thessalonica, these noble words have been a source of strength, encouragement and discipline to the faithful in Christ Jesus

from their writing to the present time. No child of God can afford to ignore nor to neglect these words of divine counsel, and in proportion as each of us gives heed to them our lives will surely be the more Christ-like, and we will thus be the more pleasing to the Lord, and eventually make our calling and election sure to joint-heirship with him in the Millennial king-

dom, and its glories and its service to the world of mankind. Let us take up these apostolic injunctions seriatim.

Not the elders alone are exhorted by the Apostle, as though they were a separate class, exercising control and treating the brethren as their wards; he addresses the "brethren"—the entire church, including the sisters also. But this does not signify that the counsel would not apply specially to the elders; because they were selected as amongst the brethren most advanced in Christian doctrine and practice, and as the representatives of the church, to specially look after the interests of the Lord's flock. These apostolic words apply to each member of the flock in proportion to his capacity and ability, but would naturally come with special force to the elders who, under God's providence, had the oversight of his church, "to feed the flock." (Acts 20:28) While, therefore, all the brethren are to see to the carrying out of the injunctions here given, the elders in every church should feel a special responsibility respecting them—a responsibility derived from the position they occupy as representatives of the church,—its standard-bearers.

The unruly are here contrasted with the feeble-minded or faint-hearted and the weak. The divine arrangement is full of order as well as full of liberty; and, rightly understood, liberty can best be conserved by order; and order best be maintained through a reasonable recognition of personal liberty. The mistake frequently made, not only by earthly law-givers and disciplinarians, but also in the church of Christ, is along the line of extremes, either in one or the other of these directions. Some misunderstand liberty to mean lawlessness, disorder, unruliness. Others with equally good intentions, no doubt, are disposed to carry order and obedience to rules to such an extent as to dwarf the individual liberties of the flock. Great grace is needed along this line, to prevent friction amongst the Lord's people—to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bonds of love and peace.

We are not to have such false ideas of personal liberty as would ignore rules, law, order, in the assemblies of the Lord's people; and those disposed to be unruly, self-conscious, thrusting themselves forward, without the request of the church, need to be held in check—to be "warned"—to be shown that their course is contrary to the spirit of the Lord and all the arrangements instituted by the apostles, his representatives. They need to be "warned" also that their course would mean injury to the church, instead of blessing and peace and joy and development; and injury to themselves, in that it would develop in them a combativeness or self-esteem, already too large, and might thus not only work injury to the cause, but hinder themselves from attaining the character-likeness necessary to a share in the kingdom.

But while some might need thus to be warned and held in check, others, faint-hearted and weak, would need aid, support, encouragement;—naturally backward, diffident, lacking in combativeness and self-esteem, they need to be pushed to the front a little, in order to bring out what talents they really possess, for their own encouragement and for the blessing also of the entire household of faith.

"Be patient toward all," seems to imply that the better balanced amongst the Lord's people should look with sympathy upon and exercise patient forbearance toward the classes above mentioned;—not only toward the weak and those who lack courage, but toward *all*; including those who have too much courage and self-push. The Scriptures repeatedly admonish us, "Ye have need of patience," and day by day the advanced children of the Lord realize the truthfulness of this, and come to appreciate patience as one of the chief Christian graces. (1) Growth in knowledge helps us to grow in this grace of patience, for as we appreciate more and more the heavenly Father's patience with us it helps us to apply the same principle toward others. (2) As we come to realize the great disaster that is upon our race as a whole—our fallen condition and how the fall has affected some more in one manner and others more in another—some chiefly mentally, some chiefly physically, and some chiefly morally, it enlarges our sympathy toward our fellow-creatures, and thus increases our *patience* in dealing with them. This is particularly true in respect to the household of faith, in which we recognize amongst those whom God has graciously called, some more blemished, perhaps, than ourselves in some particulars—though we may be more imperfect in others. The thought that our heavenly Father has favored and called anyone should make us extremely careful how we would co-operate with the Lord in respect to the call, and be as helpful as possible to all those who are seeking to walk with us in the footsteps of our Lord in the narrow way. We certainly should have special patience, therefore, with the brethren.—Rom. 14:15; 1 Cor. 8:11.

"See that none render evil for evil unto any." This ex-

hortation has a special force when we remember how much evil treatment was heaped upon the followers of our Lord at that time; and that the writer himself, as well as those specially addressed, had suffered much on account of their faithfulness in dispensing the Word of the Lord, the Word of life, the good tidings. The exhortation means that the Lord's followers are not to attempt to retaliate upon their enemies by doing them evil in return, or in any manner to "get even with them." The Lord's exhortation is that we seek to render good in return for the evil we receive, and includes our language as well as our conduct, we are not to give word for word, railing for railing, accusation for accusation, slander for slander any more than blow for blow. It includes also our very thoughts, for we are not even to render anger for anger, malice for malice, envy for envy. Two evils can never make a good—two wrongs will never make a right. Our sympathy for our blinded enemies is to cultivate our patience and forbearance toward them in thought, word and deed.—1 Pet. 2:21-23.

The Lord's people, so far from ever turning aside to render railing for railing or evil for evil, are uniformly to "*pursue that which is good*"—that which is right, that which the Lord approves. This will mean that each member of the royal priesthood will pursue righteousness to the extent of his ability—pursue every good and noble sentiment, and seek to live as nearly as possible up to the high standard of righteousness, perfection, exemplified absolutely in our Lord. This pursuit of goodness is to be maintained not only amongst the brethren, where all are professing the same pursuit, but also toward others—in our dealings with the world. Some of the world can learn more of the Gospel through witnessing our avoidance of evil and our constant pursuit of righteousness, than by anything we can say to them;—and possibly as they discern the new life in us they may gradually come to have an "ear to hear" the message of good tidings which has wrought this change in us.

The worldly spirit does not approve this part of the Apostle's counsel, but urges, rather, that we should treat others as they treat us—that we should "give as good as we get,"—meaning that we should give as bad as we get. By way of saying as good a word as they can in their own favor along these lines they sometimes accuse the Lord's followers of cowardice. Courage is one of the noble qualities of humanity, and it is quite a trial to some to be considered timid or lacking in courage; and to such this enjoined restraint of word and act is a particular trial. It is not true, however, that the Lord's counsel tends to effeminacy or lack of courage. This matter is well stated in the language of another, as follows:—

"One feature which stands out clear in the society founded by Christ and his apostles is the extraordinary heroism which was shown in the face of death and tortures, not only by men, but by feeble women and tender children. It amazed the heathen magistrates who were striving after *fortitude* by the aid of philosophy. It amazed the wild savages, who mistook gentleness for cowardice, when they found it was harder to terrify the missionary who came with the Gospel than the invader who came in battle array. Quiet endurance may be *more heroic* than violent resistance, and the Christian law of bearing personal insults and injuries meekly tends to the development of the highest courage and truest manliness. There is nothing more courageous, more heroic, in all history than living up to this precept."

"Rejoice evermore" is the same exhortation that in our last lesson we saw the Apostle sending to the Philippians. The Christian's rejoicing is not hysterical, but founded on established principles, upon promises and comforting assurances of the divine Word which stands firm amid all the storms and trials and shocks of life.

"Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks." Only somewhat advanced pupils in the school of Christ are prepared clearly to comprehend this exhortation. Having surrendered their wills and all of the interests of the present life to the Lord, exchanging earthly interests for heavenly interests, the Lord's people are less disposed than others to pray unceasingly for *earthly good things*. Having set their affections on things above, their prayers are in respect to those things,—the heavenly robe, the heavenly food, the heavenly favor. Their prayers are specially for such leadings of divine providence and such assistance of divine grace as will enable them to rejoice always in such experiences as their gracious Lord may deem best for their spiritual development. More and more they find their prayers to consist of thanksgiving for blessings already received, as well as for those yet to come, which they grasp by the hand of faith.

Their prayers are without ceasing, in that, having the condition of heart which is in fellowship with the Lord and fully devoted to the doing of his will, they not only implore

his blessing at the beginning of each day, and present their thanks at the close of each day, but in all of life's affairs they seek to remember that they have consecrated their all to the Lord, and by faith look up to him in all of the affairs of life;—and in proportion to the importance of their undertakings they, by faith, realize the association of God's providence with all the interests of life and give thanks accordingly. This is the will of God concerning us;—he wills that we live in such an attitude of constant regard for his will and for his blessing;—and he wills it in respect to us because it will be the condition most favorable to our progress in the narrow way, and which will best assist us in making our calling and election sure.

Having stated succinctly the church's proper attitude toward the Lord to be one of continued rejoicing, prayer and thanksgiving and acceptance of his divine providences, the Apostle next briefly admonishes them respecting their attitude toward each other in the church, in their feasting together on the Word of the Lord;—saying,

"Quench not the spirit.

"Despise not prophesyings.

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

"Abstain from every form of evil."

By following these admonitions, their fellowship in the Lord would be the more profitable—they would, as a congregation of the Lord's followers, be helped onward the more toward the grand standard to which we are called. The spirit of the Lord amongst his people is compared to "a flame of sacred love" for the Lord and all connected with his cause: this flame is enkindled through the divine message in each one individually, when begotten of the holy spirit, and appertains, therefore, to the church collectively, under the guidance of that spirit. In proportion as the church grows in knowledge and in love and in fellowship with the Lord this "flame of sacred love" will make it a light in the world,—as a city set on a hill, which cannot be hid. This is a different figure from the use of fire as a symbol of destruction.

True, the flame of sacred love does not consume and destroy sin, but sympathy with sin; sin is not a part of the new creature, which opposes it and desires to have it consumed,—that the light of righteousness and truth may shine the more brightly. This "flame of sacred love" may, indeed, consume our mortal bodies, as living sacrifices in the service of the truth: but with such a consumption the new mind is fully in accord, and rejoices, realizing that it has in heaven an enduring habitation, and counting it all joy to be reckoned worthy to suffer for the Lord's cause. The more this "flame of sacred love" burns, individually and collectively in the church, the greater will be the progress in all good things. Hence we are to be specially on guard, that our words and conduct and the general management of the interests of Zion in our midst shall permit this spirit of love to have free course in all our hearts and lives—that it be not quenched either with false doctrines or forms and ceremonies, or too rigid rules or by worldly spirit or by cares of this life or by any other thing, circumstance or condition under our control.

The church is not to despise prophesyings: the Apostle does not mean that we are not to despise the prophecies of the holy men of old who spoke as they were moved by the holy Spirit—it would be unnecessary to caution the church on that subject. The exhortation is, not to despise prophesyings that may be done in our midst. As we have previously seen, the gift of prophecy in the sense of foretelling coming events was to some extent in the church in the Apostle's day, as one of the gifts of the spirit, to mark out the Lord's people and to assist in establishing them at a time when the inspired messages of the Lord were unavailable. We find, however, that the Apostle frequently used this word "prophecy" in respect to *public utterance*, declamation, preaching. The early churches were accustomed to having general gatherings for their mutual assistance and upbuilding, and may have been in danger of thinking more of the gifts of miracles and tongues than of connected and logical discourse respecting the truth. The Apostle points out that without discarding the other blessings, this one should not be despised—our Lord was a preacher; the apostles were preachers, and the Lord has since raised up instructors amongst his people. Hence, such service should not be despised or ignored.

We live in a time when the very reverse of this is true; when the danger is rather that too much time and too much attention may be given to preaching, and not sufficient to the other methods of inculcating truth and encouraging the Lord's flock, "edifying and building up yourselves in the most holy faith"—when too much reliance is apt to be placed upon a leader and a connected discourse.

"Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." However much they should ever come to respect prophesyings, or public preaching, the Lord's people should learn proportionately not to receive what they might hear without proper examination and criticism: they should prove all things that they hear, should exercise discrimination of mind, as to what is logically and scripturally supported, and what is mere conjecture and possibly sophistry. They should prove what they hear, with a view to holding fast everything that stands the test of the divine Word, and shows itself to be in accordance with the holy spirit; and they should as promptly and thoroughly reject whatever will not stand these tests. Alas! the Lord's people today greatly need to give attention to this exhortation; for much is being presented in the name of the Lord and as the teaching of his Word that is neither logical nor scriptural—that is supported neither by the letter nor the spirit of the Word;—much that is not good, and should be rejected. With such a discrimination prevailing amongst the Lord's consecrated ones, how much of the chaff of nominal "orthodoxy" would be rejected, and what a hungering and thirsting and searching there soon would be for the good Word of God, that would stand these tests! Let us diligently heed the Apostle's exhortation on this point.

"Abstain from every form of evil" (Rev. Ver.) gives the Apostle's thought. There are various evils which present themselves; some in their true hideousness, and some under a cloak of hypocrisy—some openly and boldly admitting their evil character and endeavoring to decoy the Lord's people into sin; others, garbing themselves as angels of light, would seek to mislead and to deceive. The exhortation is that everything that is evil, whether it have a good form or a bad form, is to be resisted and opposed. We may not say with some, "Let us do evil that good may follow." The Lord's people must be loyal to the *principles* of righteousness, under any and all circumstances. To do otherwise would be surely to undermine the character which they are seeking to build up.

To abstain from every *appearance* of evil is another thought—a different one from what the Apostle's words in the original would warrant; nevertheless, they represent a sound principle. We surely should abstain not only from evil things, whatever their form or garb, but we should abstain so far as possible from doing things that we know to be good, which our friends or neighbors might misunderstand and consider to be evil things. The spirit of a sound mind dictates that not only evil in its every form, but everything that has an evil appearance, even, should be avoided that our influence for the Lord and the truth may be the greater.

In closing, the Apostle pronounces his benediction. It is an invocation—the expression of his heart's desire on their behalf—that the God of *peace* would sanctify them wholly. He thus emphasizes the fact that God is not a God of confusion, anarchy, turmoil and disturbance, but a God of peace; and that in proportion as we are taught of him in the school of Christ we will become lovers of peace, and the peace of God will dwell in us and will abound in us more and more, and cause us to be not unfruitful in regard to holy character, and will make us advocates and promoters of peace in our words and deeds. As it is written, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." Peace in the heart, manifesting itself in the look and word and conduct, is, as the Apostle intimates, an evidence of whole or complete setting apart, and that God's spirit has come into such a sanctified heart and is filling it with his peace, the peace of God which passeth all understanding.

"And may your spirit, soul and body be preserved entire, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (R. V.) The Apostle could mean this only in respect to the church, as a whole, and not concerning the individual members: because he surely did not expect the Christians at Thessalonica without exception to live until the presence of the Lord, even as he did not himself expect to live until that time, and so declared. (2 Tim. 4:7, 8; 2 Pet. 1:12-15) The Apostle is not, therefore, to be understood as speaking of the spirit and soul and body of each individual Christian at Thessalonica, but respecting the spirit of the church, the soul of the church, and the body of the church. In other words, his desire was that the church at Thessalonica might continue to the full end of the Gospel age as a noble and faithful congregation of the Lord's body, full of his spirit and courageous in his work. As a matter of fact, we know that the Apostle's good wishes, or prayer did not come true; for this congregation, like the others he planted, died out: not heeding with sufficient care his injunctions and exhortations, not proving all things, not holding fast the good, not abstaining from evil, not being sanctified wholly, the spirit of the Lord in their midst was quenched, and as a congregation it died, or ceased to be—the

light having blessed and confirmed some, passed on to other quarters, seeking those "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."*

"Faithful is he that called you, who will also do it." The fact that the Thessalonica church has not been kept in accordance with the Apostle's prayer, is not to be charged to unfaithfulness on God's part, but to neglect and unfaithfulness on the part of those whom the Apostle addressed, or their successors in that congregation. So it is with every one of us who has been called of the Lord. It is for us to hear and to heed the Lord's message through his servants, if we would make our calling and our election sure. If not disposed to hear his message in the way he has sent it, the fault lies at our own door. Faithful is he who called us, who would rejoice to do for us abundantly better things than we could ask or think, if we accept his provisions in faith and follow the directions of his Word.

"Brethren, pray for us." There was nothing of the pope or lord about the Apostle—no feeling of such a superiority to the others of the Lord's flock that he could pray for them to their advantage, but needed not their prayers. Similar is the spirit of all who are in the proper relationship with the Lord—a spirit of humility and appreciation of all the household of faith, and of their petitions at the throne of grace—a realization that the humblest of the Lord's people has access to the throne of heavenly grace, and may there obtain mercy and find strength to help in every time of need.

"Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss." This was the ancient style of greeting, corresponding to our present style of saluting with the hand or with the hat or by shaking hands. The custom of men kissing each other is still followed in eastern countries. The Apostle's thought is that there should be thorough cordiality amongst all who claim membership in the body of Christ, and that this fellowship should be manifested by the accustomed form of greeting,—whatever reasonable form that might be. Possibly he meant—"I greet," etc., implying

* What is the Soul, What is the Spirit, and What is the Body of Man? is treated in MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. V, Chaps. 8 and 12

that he would love to be with them and greet them personally, and now did so by letter.

Before invoking the Lord's blessing upon the church, the Apostle charged most strongly that this epistle should not be considered as a private message or letter to those in whose care it was sent, but that it should be considered as his address to the entire company of the Lord's faithful, and should be read to them all. The Apostle seemed to fear that there might be a spirit of censorship amongst the leading brethren which might lead them to preserve his letter to themselves, and to dole it out second-hand to the church, either as a whole or such parts of it as in their judgment would be prudent. Such a spirit on the part of the elders in any church would be reprehensible. God's Word is for God's people, and whoever would hinder its flow would surely offend the Master himself. That the elders at Thessalonica were faithful is apparent from the fact that the epistle was delivered to the church. Some today need caution along this same line: many preachers and teachers have discerned in *The Plan of the Ages* the light of the Millennial dawn, but, instead of heralding it to others, have sought to hide it from the Lord's people that they might use it as a personal illuminant to cause themselves to shine before their flocks. They consider this cunning—"wise and prudent,"—forgetting that the Lord declares that he *hides* his deep things from the wise and prudent and reveals them unto babes. (Luke 10:21) True to our Lord's words, this class rarely makes much progress;—the truth passes on and ere long they are in comparative darkness;—because they received not the truth in the love of it, but in the love of self. (2 Thess. 2:10) Loyalty to the Lord and to his flock and to his truth, through whatever channel it comes, demands that it shall be heralded by each of us to the extent of our ability and in its purity and as speedily as possible,—consistent with the condition and interests of those for whom the Lord intended it—his flock. Shepherds who feed themselves and not the flock are warned by the Lord of his displeasure, and could not be expected to thrive spiritually, or otherwise to enjoy the light of the Lord's face.—Ezek. 34:2, 7-10.

"THIS IGNORANCE GOD WINKED AT"

ACTS 17:22-34.—FEB. 1.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"He preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection."

Persecution followed the Apostle to Berea, where we, in a previous lesson, left him teaching a very noble class of inquiring and searching minds. His enemies in Thessalonica discovered his whereabouts, and at once began to create a disturbance—no doubt believing that thus they were doing God service. The Apostle's own experience as a persecutor of the body of Christ must have helped him to very charitable views of those who so viciously pursued him. The evidences of coming trouble were so strong that the Berean friends feared to have him embark at a regular port, at which he might have been recognized, and the direction of his journey anticipated, and thus prejudices might have gone with him or before him into new fields; they, therefore, secretly hastened him to the near seashore where he obtained coastwise shipping for Athens. The Apostle, as the chief spokesman, "drew the fire" of his enemies to such an extent that their hatred seems to have been confined to him alone—not affecting Silas, his companion, nor Timothy, at this time his assistant or servant. The latter two were left behind, to strengthen and encourage the believers, whose faith already had been established.

Under these circumstances the Apostle arrived at Athens, once the world's capital in every sense of the word; but still its capital in respect to science and art and theology and schools of general instruction—its commercial and political influence having gone to Rome with the imperial control. To Athens came the youth of wealthy families of the world, and many others possessed of a special craving for wisdom,—to avail themselves of the teachers, studies and lectures—practically the only means of instruction at that time.

Without a miracle no other one of the apostles would have been competent to secure a hearing before the Athenian Council of the Areopagites—composed of the teachers of the various schools of learning, and generally speaking, of the reputedly wisest men of the world. That the Apostle Paul, without letters of introduction, without political or other influence, serving as such, should succeed in a few days in obtaining an invitation to address this august body of men, indicates clearly that he was a man of remarkable talent, as well as learning. These natural qualities in him were reinforced by the spirit of a sound mind, the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of the divine revelation, the true Gospel. The Apostle lost no time in beginning his special work: true, he first made a general in-

spection of the chief features of the city's attractions, noting its numerous public statues to the gods, whose number Pliny gives as over three thousand in the time of Nero. It was while making this inspection of the city and considering how best he could launch the Gospel message there, that his attention was drawn to one altar erected "To the Unknown God." He kept this as a text for his principal effort when the time should be ripe, and meantime, as usual, he began his ministry by going into the Jewish synagogues; but apparently finding little interest here he resorted to the public squares and markets, and discussed religious topics with the numerous students and others who gathered there.

Amongst those who heard him were some of a cynical turn of mind who said, Let us listen to what this babbler is saying; the word "babblers" signifying seed-picker, inferentially meaning that the Apostle had gained a mere smattering of knowledge, picked up some seeds of thought from others of the great teachers, and was now attempting to set himself up as a teacher. Others, disposed to persecute, said, He seems to be a setter forth of strange gods;—for to set forth any strange gods in Athens, was a crime, it being held that they already had them in plenty, and that to admit that any one could present a new god of which the Athenian teachers knew nothing, would be an insult to their learning and evidently a fraud. This, together with the Apostle's talents, secured for him a hearing before the Areopagites, or Council of the Learned. It was this Council which had the power to sentence to death anyone who should attempt to set forth strange gods in Athens; and hence the Apostle's hearing before them was probably, more or less, in the nature of a trial for life, because he had been preaching Jesus—an unheard of god amongst the Athenians up to this time—and the resurrection.

The Apostle's theme is worthy of our notice. Under the divine guidance he seemed to have a way of approaching the pith of the Gospel most directly, and these words of our Golden Text, "Jesus and the resurrection," really embraced the whole of the Gospel preached. The world, under divine sentence, was dead or dying: the redemption price our Lord's ransom sacrifice, had just been paid, and the hope to be built upon his work and to be announced to the people was *the resurrection of the dead*—that our Lord's death was the purchase price for the sins of the whole world, and that as a result, in God's

due time, an awakening of the dead shall come, and eventually the full raising up to the perfection of life of all who will accept the Redeemer as their leader and guide. This is the gospel which should still be preached, but which, by reason of various errors that crept in during the dark ages, has been beclouded and forced out of its way to such an extent that remarkably few lay any stress whatever upon the grand doctrine of the resurrection of the dead; and some are even dropping from their teachings "the ransom for all" given by Jesus.

We can picture before our minds the Apostle addressing the Council of Mars' Hill, composed of "the noblest blood of Athens, the first politicians, the first orators, the first philosophers; accordingly the most august, not only of Athens, but of Greece, and, indeed, of the whole world, under whose supervision 'came the transactions of the popular assembly, religion, laws, morals and discipline.'" Now the Apostle had use for the text he had found. He must prove to these men that he was not the setter forth of a new theology, but an old one. He at once brought forth his argument, not in the discourteous language of our English Common Version, intimating that his auditors were ignorant and superstitious, but, on the contrary, in complimentary language, which we paraphrase: he said to them;—"I perceive that more than others you Athenians have respect for whatever is divine. The conviction of this came to me as passing through your city I beheld the various evidences of your devoutness, and amongst other altars noticed one with the inscription, 'To the Unknown God.' Information regarding this God I am setting forth. He is the God that made the world and everything therein, and is the Lord of heaven and earth, too great to dwell in any temples made with hands, for he is the Lord of heaven as well as earth; neither can he receive service at our hands, for he needs nothing which we have to give, but is the author of life and breath and all things; who himself created every nation of men dwelling throughout all the earth—and even all their affairs are subject to his regulations and appointments."

Thus did he set before them the greatness of the true God, in contrast with their numerous gods whom they feared or hated, revered or placated, and whose vices and frequent impotency they admitted. The Apostle thus brought his teachings within the rules and regulations, as being not a new teaching, but a fuller declaration of a God already recognized by his hearers. And indeed, so high, so noble, so great a thought of God, must have impressed his hearers favorably. We cannot doubt that the teachings of the Jews, supplemented by the Gospel presentations, have done much to lift the minds of men out of the deep degradation which came upon them soon after the flood, as explained by the Apostle.—Rom. 1:20-32.

A God who was not merely the God of one nation or of one city or of one precinct, but who had created all races and nations, and had had to do with the rise and fall of nations, was certainly a very different God from anything that had ever been heretofore suggested to the minds of these philosophers; for although the Jews had preached the same God, undoubtedly their presentation of him as the God of the Hebrews must have favored the impression that each nation had its own god or gods, demanding its worship, reverence, sacrifices, etc.

In verses 26, 27 the Apostle implies that the Lord's ordering of the national affairs had something to do with the propagation of the knowledge of himself, and so we find it has been. The bringing of the world under successive empires—the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian and Roman—had tended to unify the race to some extent, and to make more possible the promulgation of the gospel. During the Grecian period the Greek language was spread abroad throughout various lands, and it still maintained its supremacy as the language of the world, although the reins of government had passed to the hands of the Romans, under whose pushing, war-like power the world in general would be brought much closer together than it had ever been from the time of the confounding of tongues at Babel. All this had occurred at the proper juncture of time as concerned God's favor to Israel, according to the flesh, the birth of Jesus, his crucifixion and the gathering of the ripe "wheat" from that nation, and the scattering of the remainder. All these things were, under divine supervision, working in the interest of mankind, "that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us." The Apostle would assist his hearers in finding this true God, who was to be found of them, and whom they had indicated their desire to know when they erected the altar referred to.

Describing the true God further, the Apostle assured his hearers that none could live or move or have existence, even, aside from the power and good intent of this great God. His

words are equally truthful whether we restrict them to the imperfect existence of the present time and the dying condition of the world, with but a spark of life, or whether we apply them in the fuller sense to the Lord's provision for the future by restitution processes and arrangements. Still wishing to offset the thought that his message was a new one, the Apostle declares that certain Grecian poets had practically expressed this thought in saying, "We are also his offspring." Carrying the mind, then, to the logical conclusion, he urges that if we are the offspring of God our thoughts respecting divinity should not lead us to make or to worship images of any kind, all of which are professedly of man's device.

The Apostle's *method* is worthy of our imitation. All wise people distrust novelty, and incline to say that whatever is valuable has long been. We, like the Apostle, should endeavor to show that the true Gospel is not a new theology, but the old theology; not a new Gospel, but the old Gospel,—the one foretold to Abraham; the one announced by the angels on Bethlehem's plains as "good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people;" the one declared by the Lord Jesus himself and by all his apostles. In proportion as we would show that errors prevail today, which had their origin in the "dark ages," we must show that we are not forging a new theory equally erroneous, but that we have discarded the errors of the dark ages, and have gone back to the first principles and precepts and instructions of the gospel, as announced by the Lord and his authorized representatives, the apostles.

An explanation was necessary as to why this great God who had created all nations, and was directing their welfare, had neglected to send word to the Athenians until now. The Apostle did not go into a full explanation of the matter, with which his hearers would not have sympathy—he did not attempt to show how God in the past had merely been giving the world lessons in respect to the wages of sin, neither did he mention how Abraham's seed had been selected as the line through which divine blessings were to be carried eventually to all the families of the earth, and that God had been dealing with the natural seed of Abraham for the preceding eighteen centuries, making types of them and through them illustrating the progress of the divine plan as it shall ultimately be carried out. He did not explain, either, how that Christ offered himself to this nation of Israel, and (in harmony with the divine foreknowledge) had been rejected, and that now God was seeking a spiritual seed of Abraham—spiritual Israelites—to take the place of the broken-off branches of the fleshly house.—Rom. 11.

He contented himself with the bare statement of the truth, that in times past God had "winked at" or overlooked or disregarded and paid no attention to the idolatries of the world, but that now the time was come for a change of dispensation;—that now God was sending his message to them, and to all who had ears to hear, commanding repentance from sin and turning from idolatries to true worship and righteousness. Quite possibly, though the account does not state it, the Apostle explained that the foundation or basis of this call to repentance was the fact that Christ had been a propitiation (satisfaction) for the sins of the whole world—clearing men thus from the original condemnation of death and alienation from God, and permitting the return to his favor of whomsoever would.

The word "because" commencing verse 31 has a special significance which should not be overlooked. God calls upon all men to repent and reform, *because* he has appointed for them a day of judgment—a day of trial or testing. Not a trial for testing or judging whether or not they are imperfect and fallen, for this God already knows, even better than we do, and his Word expressly declares that "There is none righteous, no, not one." Such a trial, such a judgment ray, therefore, to see if any were righteous, would be a farce. The object of the day of trial or judgment referred to by the Lord is totally different from this.

It is to be a trial day or judgment day to see, to test, to prove which of the world of mankind desire fellowship with the Lord, desire to be obedient to him, desire to walk in his ways. The Millennial age is this trial day, and the Lord assures us that a full opportunity shall be granted to each and every member of the race to hear, to know, to comprehend his goodness, his love, his redemption of the world through Christ, and his willingness that they should come back into fellowship with him—back to a condition in which he could justly accord to them everlasting life. God could not reasonably command any to repent and return until the ransom was paid at Calvary, because it was his own law that had forbidden them to have fellowship with him, and that law must first be satisfied; and because he could not reward with life everlasting any who

would seek his face, until he had made provision through the death of Christ for the payment of the death penalty against the race and through his resurrection for the times of restitution.

It is a further part of this blessed assurance that the judgment or trial of the world will be "in righteousness"—under a reign of righteousness when the besetments of the adversary and his deceptions will be at an end, and when, therefore, a clear and explicit knowledge of the Lord and of the truth will fill the earth, as the waters cover the great deep. What a gracious gospel the Apostle had to preach! It was so good, indeed, that he had to be guarded in his expression of it;—too good for his hearers to appreciate, with their debauched ideas of the cruelty and perversity of the gods—even as it is too good to be appreciated today by those whose minds have been more or less confused by the horrible theological nightmares coming down to us from "the dark ages."

The Apostle was proceeding logically to show that the resurrection of Christ from the dead was God's assurance to all that he would ultimately carry out this great plan of blessing the world, by granting to each member of it an individual trial or judgment for life, under the favorable conditions of the Millennium; and that the resurrection of Christ was not only God's attestation to men that his sacrifice has been satisfactory, but was also necessary, that our Lord Jesus as the risen and glorified Son of God might exercise in due time "all power in heaven and in earth," and thus bring about the great Thousand-Year Judgment Day, or "times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:21) But with this his hearers, who must have been amazed with the logic of his argument, and must have wondered how their various disciples would be influenced by the new teacher, and to what extent they would lose caste, as being less logical or less lofty in their sentiments, found occasion for an expression of dissatisfaction, and of thus logically casting aside the entire argument—dismissing it as unworthy of further consideration.

Their objection rested on the resurrection, which the Apostle made so prominent, so indispensable to the carrying out of the entire plan of God; indispensable, first, as to the Redeemer, that he must rise from the dead, ere he could be the agent of Jehovah in prosecuting the work of blessing the world; necessary to the world of mankind, that they might come forth from the tomb and be granted a knowledge and opportunity of restitution or resurrection to all that had been lost by Adam's disobedience. When the resurrection was mentioned the occasion for expressions of derision was furnished, as though they would

say "We knew that there could be no thorough-going philosophy superior to our own; we were on the look-out for the weak point in the argument of this speaker who sets himself up to be a teacher, and now we have found it;—the resurrection! Nonsense! Whoever saw or heard of a resurrection from the dead?"

Others of his auditors were less violent in their expressions, but agreed that they had heard enough for the present—implying that the argument was not very satisfactory when it needed to be supported by a resurrection hypothesis, which, to them, seemed very much less reasonable than their own philosophies,—that a man never died, and that when he appears to die he really becomes more alive than he ever was before. From their standpoint of view there could be no resurrection of the dead, since there were none dead,—all being more abundantly alive from the moment of apparent death. This has been the point of contest between the Scriptures and those who hold to them as the Word of God, and all other theories advanced by and backed by the adversary and in accordance with his original deceptive statement, "Ye shall not surely die." Those who would be on the Lord's side must accept the Lord's statement, "Ye shall surely die;" must admit that it is true; must admit that it was necessary that Christ should die, as our representative and substitute, to free us from the condemnation of death, and must admit also that only by a resurrection of the dead can we come back again to life,—to absolute perfection and full harmony with God.

However, one member of the Council of Mars' Hill (the Areopagite Society) had been deeply interested in the truth he had heard; also a woman of some distinction, and others with them;—for although the Society alone occupied the place of prominence in such discussions, the people in general were privileged to surround the court. The Apostle's experience here, as elsewhere, like our own, demonstrates the fact that at the present time not many have ears to hear the Word of the Lord, not many are seriously "feeling after him if haply they might find him." The majority are blinded by the god of this world, Satan, through various traditions, heathen and Christian, so that they cannot discern the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the true Gospel. At the present time it is not given to all to see and to understand (Matt. 13:11; Mark 4:11), but we thank God that the time is coming when all the blind eyes shall be opened, and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped; and then the preaching of "Jesus and the resurrection" will mean a great blessing, and all shall come to the knowledge of the truth, from the least to the greatest, as the Lord, through the Prophet, has declared.—Jer. 31:33, 34.

OUR EARNEST DESIRE

All who love the Lord love all who are sincerely his brethren—"begotten again" (John 1:13). And all who love the brethren have a burning desire to do them good—to assist them into the light and joy and peace of present truth. Our readers very generally agree that the MILLENNIAL DAWN is the best of all helps, and next to it ZION'S WATCH TOWER. We use tracts, etc., merely with those whose desire for the truth is doubtful—to stimulate an appetite for more, and that we may learn who they are. These tracts we can supply you in any quantity free. But we are specially anxious that all of the Lord's followers should read the DAWNS and TOWERS. We, therefore, make the following offer, good throughout 1903:—

Anyone on the WATCH TOWER lists may send us the addresses of friends who promise to read the DAWN if loaned them free of charge, and who promise to return it (postpaid) at some time during the year—or to pay for it, or to send us a letter stating that they have read it with interest and profit and desire to retain it for future reading and reference, but are too poor to pay for it. In the latter case we will write them, making the book a gift, instead of a loan. We have long pursued this plan, except that heretofore we have required that the request come direct to us—whereas now we propose accepting the request through our readers. Furthermore, anyone already on our lists may send us in the names of any of their friends who will express to them a desire to receive the WATCH TOWER for three months, but do not feel that they can afford to pay for it. Such of these as you can assure us are true Christians and have already manifested interest in present

truth, we will enter for the balance of the year, at your request, free. This differs from our ordinary offer, in that heretofore we have required that all entered either free or on credit shall write their requests directly to us: we find that some have been denying themselves the visits of the TOWER because of backwardness in asking. Such should be assured that we have a Lord's poor fund which pays for these papers, and that it will afford us pleasure to send it to them; that, indeed, it grieves us to learn of any interested in "this way" (Acts 9:2), being for any reason deprived of the regular visits of the TOWER.

With these liberal terms at your disposal we surely ought to have a list of 30,000 by this time next year. Remember, however, that you must write us that these friends requested that their names be thus entered—otherwise we could not list them. We must live up to the letter and spirit of the postal rules.

Our provision of last year holds good for 1903, viz., that any one now on the TOWER list may send us *four six months trial subscriptions* for one dollar.

We still advise that subscribers take advantage of our special offer of cloth-bound DAWNS, postpaid by us at 25 cents each. No other books in the world are sold at such a price:—any volume, any language. This special concession is to offset the fact that adverse postal rulings no longer permit us to send the paper bound editions singly at less than 20 cents per volume, even wholesale.

SONG OF CYRUS' MEN

When the great finger writes across the wall:
"Thou in the balance weighed and wanting art;"
Let me not then be in the feasting hall,
But from th' accursed city far apart.

Yes, rather with that vig'lant band of men,
Nurtured in trial, persecution, doubt,
To smite th' ill-fated ramparts when the sands
Within the measuring glass have all run out.