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the paper. We are not only willing, but anxious, that all such be on our
list continually.

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1904.--MEMORIAL SUPPER.--1904.

On the evening of Tuesday, March 29th, after six
o'clock, will be the proper time for the celebration of our
Lord's Memorial Supper;--on its anniversary according to

the Jewish system of reckoning in vogue in our Lord's day and still. The Jewish Passover, lasting a week, begins the next evening at six o'clock. We do not celebrate the Passover, but the killing of the antitypical Passover Lamb. "Christ our Passover (Lamb) is slain for us, therefore let us keep the feast."--I Cor. 5:7.

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PASTOR RUSSELL'S DISCOURSES EVERY MONDAY.

By a special arrangement with The Pittsburgh Gazette a stenographic report of Pastor C. T. Russell's discourses will be printed on Mondays. We will send you "The Pittsburgh Gazette" (daily) and ZION'S WATCH TOWER twice a month for a period of 12 months for \$3.25, which is about the price of The Gazette alone. The subscriptions must be paid in advance and sent to us. For terms for extra copies of the Monday Gazette, see our issue of January 15th.

NOTICE.--Where Gazette agencies are established the issues desired can be readily obtained through them. The Gazette refuses to mail papers to towns where they would interfere with the agents already located.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

IT takes \$300,000,000 a year to "keep up the work of Christianizing our own land," says the Central Christian Advocate (Kansas City, Mo.), while "fully 1,000,000" is annually absorbed in the Christianization of the whole world. "The money is almost wholly voluntary." Of the sum required for the United States, the same paper says:--

"The sum of \$31,000,000 was laid on the altar by Catholics, \$26,000,000 by Methodists, \$20,000,000 by Presbyterians, \$14,000,000 by Episcopalians, \$12,000,000 by Baptists, \$75,000 by the Salvation Army. In addition to these expenditures noted above, there were also paid out, under church supervision, funds estimated as follows: For new buildings, \$27,000,000; for hospitals \$28,000,000; for education, \$21,000,000; and for Sunday schools \$7,000,000.

"The progress and wealth of church institutions in this country can be impressively illustrated by a single comparison. In 1800 there were 2,340 churches, valued at \$1,500,000; to-day there are 178,481, valued at \$724,971,372. These figures speak not of selfishness, but of the truest altruism, of philanthropy, and of the willingness to pay the price of enthroning Christ in the world."

Fifty years ago, we read further, the annual outlay

for church purposes throughout the entire world was but half as much as it is to-day, or \$500,000,000. The \$1,000,000,000 of the present year, moreover, will be wholly inadequate in the years that are to follow, because "the resistless advance of Christianity is accompanied with an increasing cost," which can be met only by "the free-will offerings of men, women and children." "This cost is in a sense the measure of the increasing determination of good people that Christ shall be enthroned king."

"The philosophy of the ages is the Christianizing of the world. That is the key to the evolution going on everywhere. Christianity is making its steady and resistless advance, now here, now there, now everywhere, like the rising waters of a universal tide. It explains the past achievements of the best in the race, and inspires our hope for the future of the race. What will be, ultimately, will be well, because it will be Christlike.

* * *

A blessing surely comes to everyone who conscientiously sacrifices time or money in the laudable effort to help fellow-creatures. We rejoice to give credit for some measure of unselfishness being represented in these figures, but reflect that some of this money may have been drawn, threatened or coaxed from rather unwilling givers, and that the collectors of some large benevolent societies receive one-half of their collections for their services, which are not perhaps wholly unselfish. However, even if we were uncertain that present compassing of sea and land to make a proselyte were no better in its result than in the olden times missions (Matt. 23:15) we should still agree that the stirring of men's hearts to sympathy and giving does good to the givers: another demonstration that it is "more blessed to give than to receive."

On the other hand we are not so sure either that this money was given to "enthroned Christ in the World." A strong evidence to the contrary is that when our Lord's second coming and kingdom are referred to, even amongst preachers, the subject falls flat, if indeed it does not arouse angry opposition. These things and others lead us to fear that it is self-enthronement in the world that is sought. Sectarian or Churchianity enthronement, we believe, is greatly coveted by Protestants as well as Catholics. They could almost ignore their differences and combine--so anxious are they to conquer the world.

But we are glad that even though the Lord may permit them again to get a measure of control, as Papacy had it during the dark ages, we have the assurance of his Word that it shall not again triumph to the same extent, but be cut short by the great time of trouble which will usher in the real

reign of Messiah, which they do not desire.

We are glad, too, to believe that their opposition is largely the result of blindness, and that with the later opening of the eyes of their understanding they will rejoice in the new heaven and new earth conditions (the new social and ecclesiastical conditions) introduced by that long-promised Kingdom of heaven, which will surely prove to be "the desire of all nations."--Isa. 65:17-25; Hag. 2:6,7.

Meantime now, as during the dark ages, God

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has "a peculiar people" whom he is calling out and educating for his coming work. These bend their energies, physical and financial, to the work they see directed in the Lord's Word:--the preaching of the gospel of the Kingdom and the gathering of those having hearing ears, not to sectarian "bundles," but to the Lord himself. Though insignificant in name and fame amongst the worldly wise and mighty, these are mighty now in the Lord's hands to the pulling down of the strongholds of error. And in the future, glorified as the "Lamb's wife," they shall be joint heirs with their Lord in the glorious Kingdom work of blessing all the families of the earth with the true light and assistance. These can afford to be peculiarly like Christ and the apostles now, that by and by they may be like them in glory.

SCIENCE FALSELY SO CALLED.

Our wise men, anxious to disprove the Bible record of the Creation, "prove" much by the stone formations of the earth's crust; and freely talk about millions of years being necessary to produce the stone conditions which are everywhere apparent. Their long arguments and wise conclusions were made to look very silly recently by an accident near East St. Louis. A car of lime and a car of potatoes were partly submerged together in the river. The slacking lime fired the car and the astonishing result was that every potato was turned to flinty stone in less than twenty-four hours. The Lord's people have no need to feel ashamed of the old Book.

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ENTERED INTO HIS REST.

PILGRIM Brother Henry Weber has passed beyond the veil, to be forever with the Lord. We rejoice on his behalf. He finished his earthly course on Thursday, January 21st, at 2.15 p.m., at his home --Oakland, Md.--and was buried on Saturday, the 23rd. A large gathering, composed of his family, friends and neighbors, was addressed by the Editor of this journal, from the text, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, they shall rest from their labors, but their works shall follow them."--Rev. 14:13.

The dear Brother's faithfulness as a servant of the Lord and the Brethren and the Truth is too well known to our readers to require comment. He had been a true Christian for many years. At first an active Episcopalian and Y.M.C.A. worker, he was counted of the Lord worthy to know of Present Truth, and from then until the day of his death, he was "not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." Very many now rejoicing in the light of the divine plan of the ages have good cause for thanking God for the efficient services of this dear Brother,--either as the planter or the waterer of the good seed of the Kingdom.

As we believe that we are now living in the time indicated in the text by "henceforth"--the time of the Lord's second presence for the setting up of his Kingdom,--and as we believe that our dear Brother was one of the faithful of the Kingdom little flock, so let us believe that, his labors (toil and weariness) having ceased, his work nevertheless continues--beyond the veil.

We are not Scripturally informed what is the character of the work of the Church beyond the veil (the Lord and the risen and "changed" saints), but we may be certain that in some way it pertains to the "harvesting" of the "wheat" and the binding of the "tares," etc. Hence, although we will sadly miss our dear Brother, as a friend and as a Pilgrim and as Vice-President of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, nevertheless we sorrow not as others who have less substantial hopes. Rather we rejoice with him and hope soon to see him and the dear Redeemer and all the Royal Priesthood, and to participate in the heavenly service. But meantime it behooves us to remember that our remaining days in the flesh are further opportunities for running toward the mark for the prize, or for standing fast thereat, that no man take our crown--but that we make our calling and election sure, so that an abundant entrance into the Kingdom may be granted us by our Lord, with the words, "Well done, good, faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord. Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things!"

Brother Weber left a very interesting family--his wife and one of his sons being confessors of the Lord and his Truth. For the remainder of the family we have strong hopes that the good influence of the father's character in daily life may be still stronger with them since his death--drawing them also to full consecration to the same Savior

and his "reasonable service."

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"MY PEOPLE DO NOT CONSIDER."

"Consider what I say, and the Lord
give thee understanding."--2 Tim. 2:7.

CONSIDER--reflect, think, study, ponder. Whatever may be said of the heathen religions and of churchianity in respect to their requiring little thought, little study, this is not the case with the religion of the Bible. It is not a religion of credulity-- "shut your eyes and open your mouth," and swallow what is put therein. True, it is a religion of faith;-- but a faith based upon reasonable evidences--a knowledge of God, whose plan and character it reveals. Hence it is that the Scriptures invite the faithful to consider, to search, to prove, saying, "Come, let us reason together." And it is worthy of note that all the false systems of

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religion and churchianity, misnamed Christianity, to a large extent reverse this scriptural order, endeavoring to obtain harmony, union, on a basis of comparative ignorance, rather than on a basis of growth in grace and in the knowledge of the Truth.

As we see this to be true today in nominal spiritual Israel, so we find it was true in olden times in fleshly Israel, to whom the Lord declares,--"The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people do not consider." (Isa. 1:3.) We are not to understand the Lord to mean that the Jews had no knowledge of him whose sacrifices and ceremonial law and worship had their daily attention: neither should we be understood to imply that nominal Christians, who in various ways manifest some respect and reverence for the Lord, are wholly ignorant of him. The thought is rather that God's professed people today, as in olden times, while knowing something about their Creator and Redeemer, do not know him in the sense of being really acquainted with his character. In many respects they worship a strange God, because they have failed to get rightly, thoroughly, acquainted with him. Such an acquaintance can only be obtained along the line suggested in our text: by giving heed, by considering, reflecting, studying the revelation which God has made respecting himself. Not that the Scriptures give us a detailed description of our Creator; but, rather, by revealing to us his plans, they permit us through an understanding of the divine plans to have an understanding of the divine character which those plans exemplify

and illustrate. As a man is known by his works, so God is known by his works. Whoever, therefore, would know God--appreciate the divine character-- must come to such a knowledge through an acquaintance with the divine plan which God is outworking.

Satan, the great adversary, seems to understand this matter thoroughly, and employs his arts of deception to hinder men from appreciating the divine plan, and thus to hinder an appreciation of the divine character --to prevent a real knowledge of God. He has been successful, marvelously so, as the Apostle declares, along these lines. The God of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not,--lest the glorious light of the goodness of God, as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ, should shine into their hearts. (2 Cor. 4:4,6.) It is impossible for him to hinder all knowledge and all appreciation of the Creator, because the quality

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of reverence is deeply engraven in the natural man who, though fallen and deranged, nevertheless instinctively looks for a God to worship. Satan's work, therefore, is and has been the blinding and deceiving men,--many of whom, as the Apostle declares, are feeling after God, if haply they might find him.--Acts 17:27.

The adversary's success in blinding mankind would not be so easily accomplished were it not that he persuades men not to reason upon religious subjects;--that upon every other subject than religion, thought, consideration, reasoning, are advisable, but that on religious subjects, credulity, mistaken for faith, is the safe, the wise, the acceptable course. So great has been his success that we find not only the heathen world in ignorance, and superstitious upon religious matters, but that the same principles, in a lighter form, prevail in Christendom --not only amongst Catholics but also amongst Protestants. The remedy for this general evil must be sought and found by all who would be saints, overcomers, --every one of whom must know the Lord not merely theoretically but actually, through a knowledge of his character by a knowledge of his plan.

Let us note how the Scriptures urge God's people to consider. They are to consider the natural things of the Lord's provision, as they touch with these in the course of human life, and are to read in them certain great lessons respecting the Creator. For instance, notice our Lord's statements, "Consider the lilies of the field." (Matt. 6:28.) "Consider the ravens." (Luke 12:24.) Our Lord calls attention to how such simple things in nature should be studied, be considered. The lessons to be learned in connection with all the affairs of life will be helpful to such as approach the study from the right standpoint, of faith in the Creator, and a realization that he is necessarily the embodiment and representative of the very highest and very noblest qualities

of which the human mind could conceive;--that he is perfect in Justice, perfect in Wisdom, perfect in Power, perfect in Love. From this standpoint of faith we can learn a great lesson from considering the lilies. Their beauty teaches us that the Lord has a keen appreciation of the beautiful, and the fact that it comes to them without their toiling or spinning, teaches us that God is abundantly able to produce the beautiful without our aid, and that if necessary he could likewise clothe us miraculously. It teaches, further, that since he has not thus made provision for our necessities, it must be because he has seen (as the Word declares) that the experiences of life in the development of the resources of nature, in providing for our own needs, will be helpful to us.

As we consider the ravens and sparrows, and note how the Lord has made provision for their necessities without barns for the winter time, it teaches us that his power and wisdom could similarly, if necessary, provide for the necessities of his people, miraculously or otherwise; and that in leaving humanity more subject to the vicissitudes of life than the little birds, the Lord doubtless intends thus to instruct mankind and to develop its reasoning faculties in respect to life's interests and necessary provisions, and in a manner that will be more

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helpful to him, better calculated for his development than would such a provision as is made for the dumb brutes. Faith can learn in all the affairs of life lessons of divine wisdom, and may assure itself reasonably, in harmony with the Lord's suggestion, that human beings are much more valuable than many sparrows, many ravens, many lilies, in God's sight; and that we may therefore more reasonably trust to his goodness and his interest in human affairs.

Thus considering, and looking through the little affairs of life, and noting the divine character as revealed in them, the mind is prepared for the still greater revelation of God's goodness set forth in his Word, which assures of his sympathy for humanity in its fallen condition, and of his willingness to assist in man's recovery from sin and death along lines in harmony with justice and love. Considering, from this standpoint, the love of God revealed through his Son Jesus commends itself at once to our hearts as being in full accord with what we find to be his general character--justice, wisdom, love. The heart that thus considers makes progress, grows in grace, in knowledge, in love. The heart that fails to consider the little things fails to be able to appreciate the larger things, and thus is hindered from a proper consideration of God and from a proper appreciation of his plan, and thus from a proper appreciation of his character.

It is David, the prophet, who exclaims, "When I

consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers!" (Psalm 8:3.)
To the Prophet, whose mind was rightly directed
and who considered these things, "day unto day uttered
speech and night unto night showed forth knowledge;"
and as a result King David--before the Gospel dispensation,
before the giving of the holy Spirit of adoption,
before the coming of the inestimable blessings which
are ours today--gained a large appreciation of his Creator,
which became to him an anchor of the soul, both
sure and steadfast. The large conception of the divine
character gained from the consideration of the divine
work, even as seen in nature, brought the prophet-king
near to God, in humility, in veneration, in
love.

But if such a consideration of the heavens and the
things of nature are profitable and helpful, how much
more profitable is the consideration of the still higher
things revealed to the Gospel Church through the holy
Spirit since Pentecost. The Apostle Paul calls our attention
in this direction saying, "Consider the Apostle and
High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." (Heb. 3:1.)
But how few of those who read the Scriptures
have ever followed the Apostle's suggestion? how few
have ever considered Jesus from the standpoint suggested,
--as the Church's Apostle or special teacher sent of
God to specially guide and instruct the Church, and as
the church's High Priest to whom the faithful occupy
the relationship of under priests? Had more consideration
been given by the Lord's people to these matters,
a larger number would undoubtedly be much farther
advanced than they are today, in the knowledge and
love of God. They would have seen that if Christ is a
special teacher, a special High Priest of the Church,
and the Church his special pupils, brethren and under
priests, then there must be, according to the Scriptures,
at some future time, a still greater blessing in which
both High Priests and under priests will be the agents
of God in blessing all the families of the earth.

Again the Apostle speaks of the high spiritual
things which we are to consider, after we have taken our
first lessons in considering the natural things, the lilies,
ravens, heavens, etc., saying, "Consider him who endured
such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest
ye be wearied and faint in your minds." (Heb. 12:3.)
Alas, how many of God's true children become weary
and faint in their minds, and are in danger of losing
the chief prize because they have failed to think upon,
to study out, to comprehend, to consider the Lord and
what he faithfully endured of opposition. As they
would consider his perfection and how, as represented
in him, the light shined in darkness and was not appreciated,
so they would expect that the light shining from
them would not be appreciated either.--(John 1:5.)
As they would consider how the Lord suffered in
every sense unjustly and for righteousness' sake, and
then would reflect that their own conduct, even though

well meant, is imperfect, it would strengthen them to endure hardness as good soldiers, and not to be weary in well doing, and not to faint under opposition. It would enable them to realize what the Scriptures plainly declare, namely, that experiences and testings are necessary to the Lord's people and if rightly received these all work out everlasting blessings.

Such consideration of the Lord and what he endured and the reflection and realization of their own imperfections while seeking to walk in his footsteps, would tend to bring them not only to appreciation of the Lord's sympathy for his people and his grace toward them in covering from his sight their unwilling imperfections, but additionally, this consideration would lead to sympathy for their fellows in the narrow way. The Apostle intimates the propriety of such reflections, saying, "Consider one another to provoke [incite, inspire] unto love and good works."--(Heb. 10:24.) Oh, how much the Lord's people need to remember this injunction, if they would have proper forbearance and love one toward another,--to consider one another's sacrifice, to think of each other's imperfections, peculiarities or good qualities, as the case may be. With the Christian brother consideration always means to think kindly,

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charitably, even of the blemishes which love cannot hide. These blemishes are not to be considered lest they sour our hearts and arouse in our minds an opposition to one another; nor are they to be considered as an excuse for gossip or slander. The Apostle explains that we are to consider one another with a view to ascertaining how we can be most helpful to each other in the narrow way, most edifying, most strengthening, most inspiring.

But now another matter: Looking back to our text we find that the Apostle has united in it two thoughts: first, the necessity of considering; second, the necessity of having divine assistance in order to the reaching of a right understanding. "Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding."

The natural man may assent to a great deal of what we have here written; yet in some particulars it will be beyond his grasp. It is only for those who approach the study of the divine will from the right direction--only for those who consider from the standpoint of the school of Christ, learning of him--only such have the divine assistance which the Apostle mentions, the understanding which comes from the Lord. It requires faith in God and his Word in order to be able to rightly appreciate either the natural or the spiritual things which are ours, and to feed thereon in our hearts and to grow strong thereby in our characters.

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"POWER ON EARTH TO FORGIVE SINS."

--MARK 2:1-12.--FEBRUARY 14.--

AFTER the busy experiences of the Sabbath day, referred to in our last lesson, our Lord withdrew from Capernaum to a desert place for private communion with the Father. Later his four disciples joined him, as also others, who urged his return to Capernaum, but instead he went for a time to other cities and villages of Galilee. Our lesson marks his return to Capernaum, where the people soon learned of his presence and gathered in large numbers to see and hear him.

It was probably at Peter's house, which in construction was

LIKE OTHER ORIENTAL HOUSES,

that the gathering was held. Many of these houses are built with a central court or yard, from which access is gained to the various rooms, which receive their light and ventilation from the yard and are usually one story in height. Oft-times a part of this yard is covered with a tile roof, making of it a kind of veranda. The outside wall extends two or three feet above the roof, which is reached by an outside stairway and in summer is the usual sleeping place. Some of the incidents of this lesson imply that this was the arrangement of the house in which our Lord was stopping, the multitude coming around by the door in the courtyard, and our Lord probably addressing them from the further end of the veranda or covered part of the court.

"He preached the Word unto them." How we would have enjoyed hearing him! how we would like even now to have a stenographic report of his "Wonderful Words of Life"! His text must have been from the Old Testament, as the New was not yet written. Quite probably his message was respecting sin and the defilement which comes to humanity through sin, and the penalty which God has prescribed, namely, death. We can mention many excellent texts for such a discourse, as, for instance, "Though thy sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." Or the types of sin and its cleansing, as represented in the treatment of the lepers under the Mosaic Law; or the types of the Law showing the necessity for the sin offerings and the work of the atonement day, as being the blotting out of sins and the reconciliation of the people to God; or the type of sin represented in the fiery serpents of the wilderness and the cure for their venom in a look at the brazen serpent on the pole, typifying our Lord. In any event we may be sure that the grand truths of the Gospel were gloriously set forth by him who "spake as never man spake."

While the preaching was in progress, four men bearing on a stretcher a palsied companion approached the house;

but the throng at the door, intent upon hearing and seeing, would not make way, even in the prospect of seeing a miracle performed. Full of faith, the bearers carried the stretcher up the stairway to the top of the low roof over to the veranda: some of the tiling was lifted and, apparently without ropes, the stretcher was handed to those below, immediately in front of the place where the Lord stood preaching. Of course

THE PREACHING WAS INTERRUPTED.

However, the Lord evidently interwove the circumstances of the interruption with the lessons of his discourse. He quietly waited and mentally reflected upon the faith of the man and his companions while the sick one was thus being lowered before him, and then said to the sick, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." We doubt not that in the Lord's providence this declaration of the forgiveness of sins came in opportunely with Jesus' previous discourse. Here was an opportunity to show that the great difficulty afflicting the whole human family is sin, without which there would be no sickness, no pain, no death, no separation from God. The Lord did not ask the man respecting his previous course in life, nor wait for him to express sorrow for sin, but handed him a pardon as a gift or benefaction. One thing, however, he did have--a condition indispensable to pardon--he had faith, faith in the Lord as the sent of God; and at that time he could have had no greater faith than this, no more particular understanding of how the grace of God extends toward us through Jesus.

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This teaches us several lessons: First, how important faith is in the Lord's estimation--he asked for faith, not for works--though of course he knew, and we all know, that if true faith were exercised corresponding works would naturally and unavoidably follow. Another lesson it taught is the willingness of the Lord to forgive sins, to ignore them, to deal with us as though we were free from sin. This, however, does not mean a total blotting out of the sins, so that they could not be revived by our loss of faith or misconduct. The parable of the two servants who were forgiven a large debt, and one of whom was subsequently cast into prison for the very debt he had been forgiven, because he did not exercise mercy toward his fellow-servant, is a proof of this. Forgiveness extended to us now on account of faith is of the nature of a covering or hiding of our sins. As the prophet expresses the matter, "Blessed is the man whose sin is covered--unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity." (Psa. 32:1,2.) Our sins are not imputed so long as we would renounce them and seek to follow the Lord in faith and in sincerity. The time for the blotting out of sins, their complete eradication, is future, as the Apostle Peter declared. Our sins will be blotted out when we receive our

new perfect bodies, in which there will remain no trace of the weaknesses, imperfections and maladies that came upon us because of original and subsequent sin.-- Acts 3:19-21.

"WHO CAN FORGIVE SINS BUT GOD ONLY?"

Our Lord perceived the thoughts in the hearts of some of his hearers in connection with this declaration that the sick man's sins were forgiven him, and he answered the objection--not specifically and in detail, but in a general way. He asked them to bear witness as to which would be the easier thing to do, and which therefore would be the more complete test of his divine authority and powers. They had thought that the forgiveness of sins would represent greater power and authority than the doing of miracles, but our Lord illustrated how much easier it is to declare the forgiveness of sins than to perform a cure, and then he did perform a cure as proof that he did have the authority to forgive sins. He said to the palsied man, "Arise, take up thy bed and go thy way." And immediately the miracle took place; the sick man was cured and able to bear away his couch on which he had previously been carried.

The question of the scribes may arise in some minds today

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and we confess that it is not entirely answered even by the miracle. The miracle shows us that the Lord did have the power to forgive sins, but it does not explain to us the philosophy of the arrangement by which our Lord Jesus was permitted to suspend the condemnation of sin which the Father had imposed. We suggest that he had authority to do this, to pronounce the forgiveness of the sins, because he had come into the world to be the Redeemer of mankind --because he had already made a covenant of consecration unto death at the time of his baptism--because at the very moment when he made this declaration he was in process of giving his life, "laying down his life," for man's redemption. Our Lord's authority, therefore, is well established. He had already done much of the work necessary for the blotting out of sins; he had left the glory which he had with the Father; he had become a man; he had consecrated his life; he had partially given it, and very shortly the sacrifice would be complete at Calvary. On the strength of all these facts, our Lord was evidently justified in declaring the man's sins forgiven.

CAN OTHERS FORGIVE SINS?

We may perhaps put an old thought in a newer and more startling form when we say that others besides Jesus can forgive sins. We do not refer to the claim of power by Catholic priests that, through the operation of forms and ceremonies and the sacrifices of the mass, they are commissioned

to forgive sins; but we do refer to the commission of God's consecrated people, the Royal Priesthood. These, as the members of the body of Christ, as ambassadors for God, as mouthpieces of the Lord, are fully qualified to declare to people today--to all true believers in Jesus--the very words which he addressed to the paralytic of this lesson. We have said, and do say, and will continue to say to all penitent believers in Jesus--to all who have come to a knowledge of God's grace in Christ, and accepted him and his Word--to these we are privileged to declare, Thy sins are forgiven thee;--thy sins are covered by the sacrifice of Calvary, and if thou wilt continue steadfast in faith and in obedience, thy sins shall ultimately be completely blotted out, and thou shalt have a share in the glories of thy Lord, in resurrection power, free from every sin and stain and blemish.--Acts 3:19.

Which is the greater power, to work miracles upon the natural body or to work a miracle of grace in the heart?--to straighten crooked limbs or to straighten out moral characters?--to heal those palsied and benumbed in body or to apply the vitalizing current of Truth, which will vivify and quicken those who are morally comatose, benumbed by sin, deadened to righteousness, truth, goodness, etc.?--to open blind natural eyes or to open the eyes of men's understanding, that they may see the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine character and plan?

Again we hold, as in our last lesson, that the great Head of the Church has given to the members of his body greater works to do than those which he did; because under his blessing and guidance we are living in the time when, under the anointing of his Spirit, it is possible to do these higher and greater works.

THE LESSON OF HELPFULNESS.

Several other lessons may be drawn from this narrative. One of these is the propriety of helping to bring one another to the Lord, to the Truth, to the influences and benefits and blessings sure to come from the contact with Jesus

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or the members of his body. A very large proportion of the blessing which has been bestowed upon the Lord's people through the Gospel has come through individual and private effort. In saying this we do not make light of preaching, studying, tract distribution, etc., etc.,--we are glad to believe that the Lord uses all of these to carry forward the Truth and to make it known,--nevertheless, we believe that there is an individual work also to be done, a personal work. We advise that all of the Lord's people, while giving diligence to use opportunities for general service of the kinds mentioned, do not forget nor neglect to look for opportunities for individual service in bringing their friends and neighbors to the Lord and into contact

with the Truth.

Many in the world hear about Jesus, hear about the great Jubilee times of restitution coming, hear about the blessing of all the families of the earth through the Seed of Abraham, hear about the call and the election of the Seed of Abraham at the present time, and have the desire to approach the Lord and to make consecration and to obtain a share in the blessing that is now being offered, yet they are morally paralyzed. They need some one to help them into the Lord's presence, to help them to the point of making a consecration of their all to the Lord. They have faith to some extent, yet they are weak in other respects, and they need others who are stronger than themselves to assist them.

To what extent are we each and all zealously using the opportunities which the Lord has put in our power to glorify his name and to bless our sin-sick neighbors, not only by telling them about Jesus and his wonderful words of life, but to what extent are we additionally helping them to come to him? There are various ways in which we may assist, by word, by letter, by invitation to meetings, etc. However, one necessary element in all help is that our own course of conduct must be in accord with that which we commend to others. If we ourselves have been to Jesus and learned of him and caught some of his self-sacrifice and love, we will be the better able to help others who desire to come to him. They who would be the ambassadors of the Lord in telling men of the forgiveness of sins and the privileges of sonship in the present time, must themselves manifest not only a faith in their own forgiveness but, additionally, must show a transformation of life in progress, evidencing the fact that they are now the friends of God, that they have been with Jesus and learned of him.

It is one thing to "bore" our friends and children with our religion, and quite another thing to manifest always such an interest in their spiritual welfare as would draw them to us for assistance when, under divine providences, they might desire to seek the Lord. Our experience teaches that many parents, otherwise loving and careful, neglect this matter, and hold themselves too much aloof from their children, particularly on religious matters. Furthermore, there is a delicacy on this subject with the sincere, lest they should be thought hypocritical, that makes them more diffident than on most other subjects. And many desirous of a word or two of encouragement and sympathy, have approached friends for advice, and have been repulsed by a joke or a worldly spirit. Every member of Christ, every Royal Priest, should remember that his first business in life, aside from his own development, is to help others to the Redeemer. Let us each strive this year, more earnestly than ever, to let our lights shine out, so that those seeking the Lord may be drawn to us as his representatives; and that in coming to us they may not be repulsed by our words or manners, but find us anticipating, sympathetic, helpful.

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THE SABBATH WAS MADE FOR MAN.

--MATT. 12:1-13.--FEBRUARY 21--

Golden Text:--"It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days."

FOR A TIME our Lord's ministries were attractive. The "common people heard him gladly," and "wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth." But by and by the scribes and Pharisees, the prominent people, socially and religiously, of that time and country, began to feel envious of him. Our Lord's conduct and teachings were in sharp contrast with their own, which were largely tinctured with hypocrisy. The more popular the Lord became with the people the more envious were those who considered themselves the religious, the intelligent, the God-respecting Jews. They despised others, calling them publicans and sinners. They evidently realized that although the promises were made to their nation as a whole, yet when the time would come for the establishment of the Kingdom only the true Israelites would be accepted as participants in it. They flattered themselves that they would be this favored class and correspondingly held aloof from the "common people."

There is a considerable similarity between the classes of scribes and Pharisees in our Lord's day and the so-called orthodox Christians of our day. In some denominations particularly there is evidenced this same spirit of despising others outside the favored cults. We are not meaning to say that there were no good Pharisees, nor are we meaning to say that there are no good people amongst those professing "orthodox" views today. Quite the contrary: but we do claim that orthodox and social and financial lines do distinctly mark and separate the people. We hold that the Lord is no respecter of wealth or of men's persons, but that he looketh at the heart, and that the pure in heart and the sincere in consecration are acceptable to him regardless of color or social or other standing amongst men. We see at the present time that the Truth is gleaned in every quarter--gathering some from amongst the wealthy

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and intelligent, some from amongst the outwardly pious and strict, some from amongst the poor, and some "publicans and sinners."

NOT MANY GREAT, WISE OR SELF-RIGHTEOUS.

It is noteworthy that quite a good many WATCH TOWER subscribers are prisoners in penal institutions. These men

became culprits under the traditions of men taught by the scribe and Pharisee classes of today, who have since found the Lord precious to their souls, and his Truth sanctifying to their heads and hearts. Reports received from the Columbus, Ohio, penitentiary from a Brother who is serving a life sentence there for crimes committed before his eyes were opened to the Present Truth, tells of the work done in that prison during the past year. Over one hundred and fifty copies of Volume I. DAWN (and some of succeeding volumes) have been in circulation in the prison, besides thousands of tracts and sample WATCH TOWERS. We have now thirteen regular WATCH TOWER subscribers in the institution. Four public meetings were held during the year, besides numerous private conferences on the precious Gospel of God's dear Son.

"THERE WAS A DIVISION OF THE PEOPLE
CONCERNING HIM."

Thenceforth, during our Lord's ministry, the scribes and Pharisees and doctors of the law continually opposed him. And it is noteworthy that it was their attacks upon him that brought forth some of the most precious truths of our Lord's ministry. As some one has said on this subject, "The flint of opposition struck out divine fire that has never ceased to burn. It was like the cannon ball from the enemy at Sebastopol, which opened a spring of cold water for the besieged garrison." And thus it is still: those who today make an attack upon the Truth only cause its beauties and harmonies to be the more clearly discerned by those whose eyes of understanding are opened and whose hearts are in a proper attitude to appreciate the Truth. Thus our Lord's ministry and the ministry of all his faithful people since has been in the nature of a testing. The light shined in the darkness and the darkness opposed it and comprehended it not, but was nevertheless reprov'd by it.

Our lesson tells us some of this opposition. Pharisees who were unjust in their dealings in daily life, and who our Lord declared were ready to devour widows' houses, by taking advantage of circumstances to buy them in cheaply at forced sale, etc., and who he declared made long prayers in public for show, that they might be thought religious--these same people were great sticklers for the Sabbath day, and being amongst the Lord's most violent opposers they found fault with his more reasonable interpretation of the Sabbath law. Our Lord's conduct and language respecting the Sabbath show that he dealt with the matter from the standpoint of principle rather than of technicalities.

GOD'S LAWS ARE MEANT FOR BLESSINGS.

The Sabbath was made for man--was made for the benefit of mankind, for men's physical, mental and moral rest and recuperation and strengthening. The Pharisees

viewed the day as though God specially desired to have the Sabbath day observed, and had created man for that particular purpose. Evidently they were in error, and our Lord had the proper conception of the Law and fulfilled it accurately.

As the disciples with the Lord walked through the field of grain, feeling hungry, they rubbed some of the kernels in their hands to separate the chaff, and blowing the latter away they ate the grain. Under the strict divisions which the Pharisees had framed this would be counted as threshing and winnowing the grain, and would be forbidden as violating the day of sacred rest. Our Lord defended the disciples against the charge, and in proof pointed out to these Pharisees how David, when pursued by King Saul, had procured from the priest the unleavened cakes on the Sabbath day, and that this was a clear violation of the Law, which forbade any other than the priest to eat that bread. Our Lord wished his hearers to see that the emergencies of the case justified the deviation from the rule.

It was a case of necessity--it was to preserve life.

Another illustration he gave was that of the priests serving in the temple every Sabbath day, and how the Law specifically provided for the labor which they would perform, and hence that such labor could not be considered a profanation of the Sabbath. He then called attention to the fact that these disciples who were with him and serving him were doing still more consecrated work than the priests and Levites in the temple, because he--the representative of the Father--was greater than the temple; hence anything made necessary in the service of the Master should not be considered a violation of the Sabbath Law.

Turning the matter upon the accusers our Lord declared that they did not understand the principles underlying the divine arrangement, else they would not have been seeking an accusation against persons who were innocent. He would have them see that the whole difficulty lay in their own hearts. They had evil thoughts and wished to find fault and had erred, whereas if their hearts had been in the proper condition they would have been full of feelings of mercy and compassion.

THE SPIRIT OF GOD'S REQUIREMENT IS MERCY.

This fault-finding disposition, that is ready to accuse and condemn everybody, indicates a wrong condition of heart--one which all the Lord's people should be on guard against. It is not the spirit of mercy and kindness and love which, as the Apostle explains, thinketh no evil. It is a spirit out of harmony with God's disposition, for, as our Lord explains, God desires mercy rather than slaughter; and those who are ready to condemn others give evidence that they lack the Lord's spirit of mercy and forgiveness.

This was the offense which our Lord charged against two of his noblest disciples in the early part of their discipleship. When the people of Samaria refused to sell the disciples food, because the Lord did not stop with them and perform miracles amongst them, as he was doing amongst the Jews, the disciples, James and John, were indignant, and said to the Lord, "Wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and destroy these men and their city?" but Jesus answered, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of: the Son of man came not to destroy men's lives but to save them." So with all of the Lord's disciples: their continual study should be to avoid that hypercritical disposition to sentence and to destroy other people while desiring mercy for themselves. The rule which the Lord establishes is that we must expect from him mercy only in proportion as we shall exercise this grace toward others.

LOVELESS CRITICISM PERVERTS THE MIND.

As illustrating this tendency to fault-finding and how it grows upon one, a story is told of a young lady who once expressed to Hogarth, the great satirist, a wish to learn to draw caricatures. Hogarth replied, "Alas, it is not a faculty to be envied. Take my advice and never draw a caricature. By the long practice of it I have lost the enjoyment of beauty. I never see a face but distorted, and have never the satisfaction to behold the human face divine." So it is with those who unsympathetically practice fault-finding and criticising others' faults; they become so proficient in the matter that they never see good qualities, but merely the deficiencies. Their own happiness is thus injured, as well as the happiness of others. It is well that we should be able to note defects--that we should not be blind to them entirely; but we may here well apply our year-text, and remember that we ourselves are most profited in noticing in others whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are reputable, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, rather than by noticing and thinking upon their defects and ignoble qualities.

"THE SON OF MAN IS LORD OF THE SABBATH."

We do not understand this to mean that our Lord claimed authority to set aside the Sabbath day, which God had appointed to the Jews in the Law--in the ten commandments. We do understand it to mean that as the Father's representative, as the great Teacher, he was competent to expound what constituted the proper observance of the Sabbath. To as many as received him his word on the subject would constitute the highest law--the highest interpretation of the divine law, far exceeding any dignity, rules and regulations of the Jewish Talmud or system of law interpretations and definitions. To his followers his words still constitute the highest law, and by his

grace we are able to comprehend the meaning of his statement that the entire ten commandments are comprehended in the one word, Love--love for God supremely and love for our fellow-man.

This talk about the Sabbath and our Lord's defense of his disciples doubtless occurred while they were on the way to the synagogue. It was a part of the Pharisaic interpretation of matters that no food should be eaten by any true Jew until after he had gone to the synagogue and worshipped. This probably accounts for the disciples being hungry and eating of the ripe grain en route.

In the synagogue was a man with a withered hand, and the Jews wishing to find ground for an accusation against the Lord before the congregation, the latter was asked the question whether or not it would be lawful to heal on the Sabbath day. Since our Lord's healing was not done by manual labor, but merely by the word of his mouth, the captiousness of his adversaries is most evident. Their hearts were wicked, even while they were apparently arguing for a more strict observance of the divine law. Let us learn from this that the heavenly Father is not pleased to see us even defend what we believe to be right in a captious and unjust attitude of mind. Mercy, goodness, love, are the elements of character which he desires to see in the spiritual Israelites, and without which we cannot long continue to be his children.

Our Lord soon answered the query and showed the weakness of his opponents. They knew well enough that nothing in the Mosaic Law could be construed by them to

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interfere with pulling an ox or an ass out of a pit on the Sabbath, even though it might require considerable exercise, --a good deal of labor for several persons. How foolish then for them to find fault with our Lord, who by one word could rebuke the disease and help one of their brethren of the seed of Abraham. After thus rebuking them and explaining that it was lawful to do good on the Sabbath day, our Lord healed the cripple.

We have no space here to enter into a discussion of present-day Sabbath observance--to point out the distinction between the seventh-day Sabbath, which was given by the Lord to the Jewish nation and to it only, and the Christian privilege which we enjoy at the present time, of worshipping and praising the Lord and studying his Word and being free from business cares and responsibilities on the first day of the week. This subject, however, is treated quite at length in MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. VI., which we trust will soon be in the hands of all the interested readers of this journal.

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WHO ARE REAL CHRISTIANS?

--MATT. 7:21-29.--FEBRUARY 28.--

Golden Text:--"Be ye doers of the Word,
and not hearers only."--James 1:22.

FOLLOWING our Lord's course, we reach in this lesson a more particular stage in his work. After the example of Peter, Andrew, James and John, others became disciples or followers of the Lord, until we may presume that his company was of considerable numbers. It was about this time that, after prayer in solitude in the mountain, our Lord made choice of the twelve who should be his special representatives or apostles; and whether it

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was before or after this selection from amongst the other disciples or followers that he gave the Sermon on the Mount, we may not be too positive, but evidently the two events occurred about the same time.

Our lesson is really a portion of the Sermon on the Mount--a conclusion to it. Supplementing Matthew's statement with that of Luke 6:43-49, we find that our Lord gave several illustrations of true discipleship at this time: (1) The straight gate and narrow way by which any might become his disciples; (2) the fruit-bearing test of being his disciples; (3) the difference between words and deeds in the Lord's estimation; (4) the vital results as illustrated by the two buildings, the one on the sand and the other on the rock.

THESE TESTS IGNORED BY CHURCHIANITY.

In our day, when the public teachings of the ministry of nearly all denominations is so different from the teaching of the Scriptures, we believe that the degeneracy of faith and practice would be much more rapid than it is were it not that very many feel it a duty to read a portion of the Scriptures daily, even though they think little about their meaning. In such readings lessons like the one we are now considering occasionally present themselves; and the lines of true discipleship are here so distinctly drawn, that the mere nominal professor is made to shudder while the true Christian is profited in proportion as he determines by the grace of God he will seek to so conform his life that he may become more and more a copy of God's dear Son.

The general thought of today in the pulpits and in private conversation and at funerals seems to be that in civilized lands everybody is a Christian and sure to go to heaven eventually, except such persons as are moral reprobates --such as are to be found in penitentiaries and prisons --and even for them hope is entertained that ere they die they may express some regret for their misdeeds. Such

regrets are seized upon by their friends as evidence that they have become Christians, and gone to heaven too.

FALSE DOCTRINE IS CHARGEABLE FOR THIS.

While condemning the foregoing as wholly wrong, we nevertheless sympathize with those whose confusion of thought is thus manifested. Their unscriptural views of what constitutes a Christian is the result of two things: (1) Teachings of the dark ages handed down through the creeds of Christendom from the "mother of harlots" to her "daughters"--creeds inspired by the teachings of those who, in centuries gone by, persecuted one another to the death for differences of opinions on doctrinal subjects--tortured one another with rack and sword and fagot. (2) To this bad foundation of error there has come within recent years a larger spirit of enlightenment and generosity in which we rejoice. But the two qualities--the errors of the past and the generosity of the present--produce a very bad combination of doctrine for modern Churchianity--a doctrine which seeks to be reasonable with itself, and which, in so doing, runs counter to a great many teachings of Scripture. The present lesson is an illustration of this.

From the standpoint of orthodox Churchianity and its teaching of eternal torture for all except those who become Christian, our Lord's words in this lesson seem very unreasonable, very unsatisfactory, very heart-rending. From their standpoint a strict application of this lesson would mean not only that the heathen world is without hope in the future, but also the civilized world and the vast majority of those called Christians have nothing to expect in the future except tribulation--eternal torment, because rejected of the Lord and not recognized as Christians, not recognized as members of his Kingdom, his Body, of his Church.

THE TRUTH ALONE IS CONSISTENT.

It is only when we get rid of the smoke and darkness and confusion of Babylon and the dark ages and their creeds, and get back to the pure, unadulterated words of the Lord and apostles and prophets, and by the grace of God are granted some opening of the eyes of our understanding, only then can we see these matters in their true light. Our Lord's discourses continually reiterated that he was seeking for some who should be counted worthy to constitute his Kingdom, to sit with him in his throne, to be his joint-heirs, to rule and to judge Israel and all the nations of the world. Not until we learn to differentiate between the Church, his Bride, the members of his Body, the Kingdom class, and the world that is to be judged or ruled by this Kingdom class in due time, can we get a clear conception of the divine purposes progressing throughout this Gospel age.

From this standpoint we can see most clearly why none can be of the Kingdom class unless they shall develop

faith and character above and beyond that of the world in general. We can see why these should be called upon to bear the good fruits; we can see why they must walk the narrow way of self-denial, self-sacrifice and character development in order to be fitted and prepared for the great work the Lord has for them to do for the world in the coming age--in the Millennium. It seems to be peculiarly difficult for the majority of people long blinded by false doctrines to see that the heavenly Father has

SPECIAL TIMES AND SEASONS FOR THE VARIOUS DEVELOPMENTS OF HIS WORK.

The world is getting a certain kind of experiences in the present time which will be valuable to it in the future --when God's due time shall come for blessing all the families of the earth to be on trial for life or death everlasting. Meantime, with those present experiences come the disciplines of the laws of nature--under which poverty, sickness and mental and moral derangements follow excesses of evil doing as pain follows contact with fire. And it is not an unreasonable hope that with the lessons of the present time before them, the world during the Millennial age will act more wisely than at present; that under

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the favorable conditions prevailing then many will not only rejoice in the great plan of salvation, but will avail themselves of it--many who are now careless in such matters, partly because they cannot see or walk by faith.

It is when we realize that the present time is one for schooling, discipline, chastening, proving the characters of those who hear and accept the divine invitation, that we see the reasonableness of all the restrictions and requirements attaching to such special discipleship. No longer do we wonder that our dear Redeemer said, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it"; no longer do we wonder that it is recorded that he spake in parables and dark sayings to the intent that the majority should not understand his message --to the intent that only Israelites indeed might appreciate and accept his call. No longer do we wonder that he declared that only those who would forsake all could become his disciples; no longer do we wonder that discipleship means self-sacrifice even unto death. Now we see that our heavenly Father could make no easier terms than these in connection with the peculiar high calling to joint heirship with his Son in the Kingdom to which he is now calling a little flock.

"NOT EVERY ONE THAT SAITH UNTO ME, LORD, LORD, SHALL ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN."

The point of this lesson is specially for those who have named the name of Christ, and who are professing to be

his disciples. It is not enough that we profess discipleship; unless the matter goes deeper than this we will be rejected. Our professions of discipleship must be sincere, and the Lord knoweth the heart and will. Although he will judge us leniently so far as unwilling and unintentional weaknesses and imperfections are concerned, he will judge us most strictly in respect to our purposes, the intentions of our hearts. Our Lord is not here referring to the Church in her present condition as the embryo Kingdom: he refers to the glorified, actual Kingdom to be established at his Second Advent. His faithful will enter into

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that Kingdom by the resurrection change--by participation in the First Resurrection, which is to include only the blessed and holy.--Rev. 20:5,6.

While the Lord's people of the present age are not to be judged by their works but by their faith, as the Apostle Paul distinctly points out, saying, "By the deeds of the Law shall no flesh be justified in God's sight," but we are justified by faith, nevertheless, works will be required. By our works we must demonstrate our faith, and, thank God, imperfect works can demonstrate to him the loyalty of our intentions, our wills. Hence the Apostle James says, "I will show thee my faith by my works," and to this all the Scriptures agree. If our works demonstrate to the Lord the sincerity of our faith, that faith will be acceptable to him and we will be counted perfect and be granted a share in the Kingdom, great and precious things which the Lord has in reservation for those who love him--not merely in word but also in deeds--for those who strive by the deeds of life to show forth, to demonstrate, their love.

The Lord carries this illustration to a considerable length, showing that he does not merely refer to people who are nominally called Christians en masse. From the Lord's standpoint the great majority of these would be merely classed as Gentiles; because they have never entered into any covenant relationship with God. The reference in this passage is evidently to those who have outwardly made a consecration of themselves to the Lord--to those who have outwardly professed a change of heart and vital relationship to the Lord. More than this, he includes not only a few, but "many," who in their outward course of life have in some measure acknowledged the Lord publicly and as here expressed.

**"IN THY NAME HAVE CAST OUT DEVILS, DONE MANY AND
WONDERFUL WORKS."**

This represents a class claiming relationship to the Lord and public ministry in his name--far above the ordinary masses of Churchianity. Our Lord declares that unless our consecration shall lead us to more than miracle-working and calling ourselves Christian, and preaching to others in the Lord's name, it shall profit us nothing. In

order to have his approval "in that day" it will be necessary that we shall develop characters in conformity with the Father's will--in conformity to the Lord's Word. Nothing but character will stand the final tests.

All about us in so-called Christian lands we see and hear many in public prayer and hymns of praise call repeatedly Lord, Lord, yet whose conduct, so far as we can see, bears no good fruit, but rather evil fruitage. Many of them are like the thorns and briars to which the Lord likened them. They reach out with helping hands to lift man up, to bless and to ennoble, but the thorns and briars tear and do injury. We live in a day when little of this injury is done physically, because the laws of civilization would take cognizance of such evil deeds and punish the evil doers. Nevertheless, the thorny and briary people find abundant opportunity for injuring others with their lips, with their tongues. Slandering, backbiting, malice, hatred, envy, strife, proceed from them because this is their nature. These bramble and thorn bushes may indeed tie on clusters of grapes and figs to deceive, but the thorny and brambly character will be sure to manifest itself to those who come near them in the contact of daily life.

No wonder that our Lord determines that such are unfit for a share with him in his Kingdom and its great work of judging and blessing the world of mankind. How could busybodies and backbiters and slanderers be fit for the Kingdom of God's dear Son? Saying, Lord, Lord, or performing some miracle in his name, does not warrant them in expecting the great blessings which the Lord has in reservation for those who love him and who in turn are controlled by the spirit of love toward him and toward all the household of faith.

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OUR FAITH STRUCTURE MUST HAVE PROPER FOUNDATIONS.

We are aware that in our day the confused and confusing doctrines handed down from the dark ages have become so obnoxious to reasoning people that they are inclined to say, Away with doctrines! it matters not what a man believes; it matters everything what he does. We sympathize with those who hold this sentiment, although we cannot at all agree with it. We hold to the contrary that doctrine is all important both to faith and works. If it were not so the Lord would not have given his doctrines so important a place in his teachings and in his parables as in the one now under consideration. No man can build a proper life unless he have some foundation, some doctrine, some faith. A man with no faith, no hope, is sure to be correspondingly lacking in character. We believe that the important thing is that we should have a proper foundation, a proper faith, a proper doctrine upon which to build character and good works.

Our Lord's illustration shows the possibility of building

upon two kinds of foundation--a worthy and unworthy sort. But let us notice before we go further that this parable does not represent the heathen in any sense of the word, nor does it represent any who, living in civilized lands, have the eyes of their understanding so beclouded by ignorance and superstition, and their ears so dulled by the god of this world, that they do not hear distinctly the Lord's message. The parable is addressed to him "that heareth these sayings of mine"--who understands my teaching. The heathen have no place under this designation, neither have the great majority of those who profess Churchianity.

The parable then most clearly finds its two classes in those who have heard the good tidings and who have received them who outwardly have made consecration to the Lord, and who outwardly are building their hopes upon his promises. The hopes built upon the Lord's promises and unaccompanied by works are hopes built upon the sand. It is only a question of time until the great testing time shall come and such hopes will be shown to be worse than useless. They will be shown to have deceived their possessor, who thought himself safe in his assurances of a share in the Kingdom. Such hopes, such faith, as fail to obediently strive to do the Lord's will, such faith and hopes as consider that obedience is not essential to a place in the Kingdom, are falsely founded; their overthrow will come with great disaster.

On the contrary, those who build with obedience, their hearts as well as their tongues confessing and honoring the Lord, their deeds corroborating their faith, and their fruits bearing testimony of their vital relationship with the Lord --these shall pass through all the storms of life and shall never be moved, never be shaken, because they are on the foundation. No wonder that his hearers thought that our Lord's teachings were different from those of the scribes and Pharisees. There was a positiveness in his teaching not to be found elsewhere. And so it is today: the Word of the Lord is reasonable, logical and satisfying in a manner and to a degree that nothing else is.

"SAVED SO AS BY FIRE."

The Apostle Paul (I Cor. 3:10-15) uses this same illustration in a slightly different manner. His illustration shows only those who are built upon the rock, Christ Jesus, but shows that two classes are building upon the rock and that while all such builders will be eventually saved, gain everlasting life, there will be nevertheless two classes of them--some saved abundantly in the Kingdom and others "saved so as by fire"--by passing through great tribulation. The Apostle's explanation is equally possible, whether we apply the gold, silver, and precious stones of the proper building to true doctrines, in contrast with the wood, hay and stubble to false doctrines, or whether we apply these symbols of gold, silver and precious stones as signifying character development, the results of sound doctrine,

and the wood, hay and stubble the deficiency of character development.

The general tenor of all these lessons is that all those who think worth while to be on the Lord's side at all in this present age will do wisely if, after counting the cost, they completely lay aside not only their besetting sins but their ambition and their hope and every desire of an earthly kind--that their entire interests may be devoted to the Lord, to knowing his will, to serving him. These are they who really love the Lord more than they love houses or lands or father or mother or children or self; these are the Lord's Jewels, who shall be joint-heirs with him in the Kingdom and in the great work of blessing all the families of the earth in due time. "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels."

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"FILLING UP THAT WHICH IS BEHIND."

Question.--(1) What significance should we attach to the Apostle's words, that the heavenly things are cleansed by "better sacrifices" than those offered by the Jewish priesthood for the cleansing or atonement in the typical system? (2) When did those better sacrifices begin and when did they end? (3) What will follow the completion of those better sacrifices? --that is, what will be the outward manifestation or blessing that will follow their completion?

Answer.--The better sacrifices are the antitypical ones begun by our Lord Jesus, and participated in by his faithful footstep-followers, who are invited by the Lord, through the Apostle, to present their bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable unto God, and their reasonable service (Rom. 12:1); and assured that in so doing they are filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ for his body's sake, which is the Church (Col. 1:24), those antitypical sufferings occupying the entire Gospel age. They began when our Lord consecrated himself to death at baptism. They reached a large degree of accomplishment when he finished the sacrifice at Calvary. The finished sacrifice represented in value all that Justice did, or could, demand as the ransom price for Adam and his

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entire race. Consequently our Lord, when he ascended up on high, was fully prepared to present his sacrifice to divine Justice as in full offset for the sins of the whole world.

But the divine plan contemplated an Anointed One composed of many members, under the headship of Jesus; and in harmony with this arrangement those

who would be invited to be members of the anointed body were granted the opportunity of participating with the Head in his sacrifice, that they might also in due time be participators with him in the divine nature and the glorious work of the Kingdom, the restitution work. For this reason alone, and not because of any lack of sufficiency in our Redeemer's sacrifice, his work before the Father when he ascended up on high was merely applied for the household of faith and not for the world.

True, certain passages of Scripture speak of our Lord's work as "a propitiation for our sins [the Church's sins] and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." This, however, according to the clear showing of the type, is an accommodated expression, referring to all the work which will ultimately be accomplished by our Lord as the result of his atonement sacrifice. Nothing is more clearly taught in the Scriptures than that atonement has not yet been accomplished on behalf of the world, but as yet only on behalf of believers.

All this is most beautifully typified in the Day of Atonement sacrifices.* These are shown to be one, in the sense that they are all performed by the High Priest and in the one day, and as parts of the one great atonement; but they are distinctly divided into two as respects the sacrifices: (a) the bullock, which represented our Lord sacrificed, and its blood applied specifically for the priest's members, and his house, typical of the body of Christ and the household of faith; (b) following this came the sacrifice of the goat, not for the same class--not for the members and household of the priest--but "for all the people." The blessing of God resulting from the sacrifice of the bullock was merely upon the priestly tribe, representing the Church, and the household of faith of this Gospel age. Only by reason of our Lord's sacrifice would any of us have any standing whatever before the Lord, or any privilege whatever in the way of sacrifice. Not until the sacrifice of the goat had been complete, and its blood had been sprinkled upon the Mercy Seat, was there a passing over or remission of the sins of the people. And so, in the antitype, the blessing of the Lord has come to the household of faith during this Gospel age, granting us the great privilege of becoming joint-heirs with the Lord, while the foretold blessing of the world, "all the families of the earth," waits--waits until the sacrifice of the goat shall have been finished--waits until the High Priest shall thus, by the sacrifice of his body-members, make atonement for the sins of mankind in general. As soon as that work shall have been accomplished we may be sure that the blessing of the Lord, the manifestation of his forgiveness, etc., will be made known to the whole world of mankind, and the curse still resting upon the race as a whole will then

be lifted from every creature, and instead the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shall flood the earth.

"Ye see your calling, brethren"--your invitation to the priesthood--the Melchisedec priesthood. We see our Lord Jesus as the great High Priest, and his faithful ones of this Gospel age, as a Royal Priesthood, under his headship. We thus consider the High Priest of our profession, order, Christ Jesus. Only the High Priest could offer the blood of these atonement sacrifices at the Mercy Seat. He offered first himself, and during this age has been working in his members to will and to do, enabling them thus to sacrifice, and giving merit and character to their sacrifices, making them acceptable as a part of his own. He will shortly finish the work and present the whole before the Father, and this will signalize the closing of this Gospel age of sacrifice; for there will be no opportunity of participating in this sacrifice after the elect members shall have filled up the measure assigned to them by their Lord.

When we think of our priesthood, let us call to mind the statement of the Apostle, that every priest must have somewhat to offer. (Heb. 8:3.) Our Lord had himself, the Perfect One, to offer--a sacrifice well pleasing to the Father. No other soul in all the world could have presented this sacrifice, for no other was worthy, and any addition to it would have been not only a superfluity, but an insult to him who arranged the plan. But the redemption having been guaranteed in our Lord's death, Justice could make no objection, and did make no objection to his appropriating a portion of this merit to those who, believing in him and being justified by faith in his blood, and thus accounted righteous, should desire to follow in his steps of sacrifice, and be counted in with him, and have their sacrifices, counted in as a part of his sacrifice on behalf of the sins of the whole world. In order to be members of this Royal Priesthood, then, it was necessary that we offer something, and we offer ourselves. We offer ourselves, not as ourselves, but as those justified through our Redeemer's merit, and desirous of being counted in as members of his body, and having whatever sacrifice we may perform counted in as a part of the general sacrifice of our Lord. The heavenly Father is pleased to accept the matter in this way; more than this, he planned it and foreshadowed it in the typical sacrifices of ancient times.

This is in full agreement with the Apostle's statement, "By man came death, and by man came also the resurrection of the dead." The first man, who brought death, was Adam; the second man, who brought life is our Lord; but our Lord has accepted a little flock as members of his body--"one new man." This is in harmony with the statement, also, that "there is one mediator between God and man, the

man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." It was for all in the most absolute sense--because without that sacrifice all could not have received the intended blessing, and because all are to receive the blessing as a result of that sacrifice, in God's due time. The fact that the Church is associated with the Lord as his members during this Gospel age alters the matter not one whit. It is still of him and by him and through him, and not of us nor by us nor through us, that the blessings are to come to mankind.

*See "Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices."

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LETTERS FOR THE EDITOR SHOULD BE SENT TO ALLEGHENY, PA., U.S.A.

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Those of the interested who, by reason of old age, or other infirmity or adversity, are unable to pay for the Tower, will be supplied FREE, if

they send a Postal Card each December, stating their case and requesting the paper. We are not only willing, but anxious, that all such be on our list continually.

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SUNDAY DISCOURSES IN PITTSBURGH GAZETTE.

Friends write that they can get people to read these published discourses who would not read the same from the WATCH TOWER or a tract. One brother tells that his friend who would not agree to read the debates, did finally agree to read Dr. Eaton's side only. But after reading that, he wanted to read our side, and did so. Since then he reads the Gazette reports regularly, and wants more and more--TOWERS, DAWNS, etc.

It is to permit a general use of these reports that we have arranged for quantities of them at the low rates quoted in our recent issue, which for the convenience of all we here repeat. We can supply you the Pittsburgh Gazette daily (except Sunday) for:

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

SELFISHNESS RULES BOTH SIDES.

WE hear much about the selfishness and tyranny of capital, and how it at times is unjust, unless restrained by law. We even hear claims made that the laws favor the rich. We could expect nothing else under the present course of

this world, under the law of selfishness. We have often wondered that our laws are so just, so equitable toward all classes as they are.

But while longing for the reign of love, let us not look for it in any other than the one direction: let us not look to man, but to God, and wait and pray, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Some are inclined to look for the reign of equity and love under Socialism. They are sadly deceived. The poor, if they had the power, would be no more equitable than the rich, no more generous, no more loving or gentle. As an illustration, take the following account of the operation of Socialism in Australia, where it has achieved great influence, but is not yet in absolute control of the government, courts, etc. Judged by its fruits there, it would be a long time in bringing "peace on earth, good will to men." We quote:--

The Philadelphia Public Ledger publishes some correspondence from Sydney that throws additional light on the Australian labor situation, as reviewed the other day in the editorial columns of The Journal. The article says that New South Wales appears destined to lose much of its shipping trade because of the exactions of labor unions. A case in point is cited.

The American ship Andromeda arrived at Fort Jackson loaded with lumber. The vessel had a union crew and proceeded to discharge its cargo, when the captain was informed he must employ only members of the Sydney Wharf Laborers' union, and that his donkey engine must also be run by members of the Sydney Donkey Enginemen's union. The captain, finding it impossible to unload otherwise, finally consented to employing the Sydney laborers, although his own sailors were union men and were being paid to do the work. However, he refused to employ the Sydney donkeymen, and the result was that he was taken into court and fined in all \$350, the money to go to the members of the Sydney Wharf Laborers' union.

WHAT THE U.S. COMMISSIONER OF LABOR THINKS.

Speaking recently before the Society of Ethical Culture, Col. Carroll D. Wright said:--

"The wages system will pass away. In its stead, I believe, there will come a system which will be composed of the profit-sharing and the co-operation ideas. The great labor question means the struggle of humanity for a higher standard of life. The employer must consider

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his employe, as well as the stockholder, as an investor."

Of scarcely less interest than his prediction of a new labor system was Col. Wright's approval of a plan to

insure labor against incapacity resulting from accident, illness or advancing age. The German idea was quoted, under which the employer pays one-fourth the cost of a sick and death benefit policy, the employe one-fourth and the government one-half. "England," said Col. Wright, "has taken up this question, and we of the United States are steadily approaching it."

Continuing, Col. Wright said: "Capital charges to the consumer the depreciation of property and machinery. Why should not the depreciation of labor's machinery, its hands, its brains, its body, be included in the final cost? We see in every progressive community that the demand of the workingman is no longer for a wage sufficient to enable him to keep body and soul together.

"Labor has been taught to feel that it is a social as well as an economic power in the community, and this educating process has gone on until the demand of labor is for a reasonable margin beyond that fixed by the iron law of wages.

"The wages system will pass away. It has, as has been shown, unsatisfactory conditions in many of its applications. It depends too largely for its equities upon the generosity and greatmindedness of employers. That there are many such who would scorn to influence the votes or actions of their employes and who would be incapable of taking petty advantage of their workmen is happily true. That there are others that will make use of these opportunities proves the weakness of the system and argues for a greater measure of independence for those who labor.

"The system that will take the place of that under which mere wages are paid probably will be composed of the profit-sharing and co-operation plans. The work

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people will then acquire the interest of investors, the more capable will rise to their opportunities and the less worthy will find their level."

* * *

The Commissioner is a fore-seer. He reasons out from observation what God's people know from the Scriptures. We see, however, what Col. Wright does not see, viz.: that the change of program is not coming about peacefully, but by a great time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation, which will introduce the Golden Rule of Immanuel's Kingdom.

FIND A HELL AND PREACH IT.

We clip the following from a daily:--

"We must find a hell and preach it," declared Rev.

Dr. Burt, of Nottingham, presiding at the monthly meeting of Methodist ministers at the Y.M.C.A. building Monday morning.

"I was never reminded of this so strongly as this morning," he said, "when I read of the devilishness of a man who could calmly write to a friend of his intentions, then go home, greet his wife lovingly, rise up in the night, murder her, murder his three children, lie down beside his wife's body and kill himself.

"Such a man ought to be damned; he must be damned. If such a murderer's punishment is not swift and awful there is no just God. It would be a good text for all of us--to preach of this terrible crime and the justice of God."

Dr. Burt's remarks came in a discussion of a paper on revivals, read by Rev. Dr. Warner and discussed by Revs. Mitchell, Moore, Cory and others. The paper regretted the tendency to preach less of an actual hell than of subjects more pleasing to the congregations. Dr. Warner believed churchgoers thought more of good worldly appearance than of salvation and said many a church was dying for need of a spiritual revival.

* * *

Poor blind guide! The abundance of his ignorance betrayeth him. He wants a man damned and tortured who already is suffering from the damnation, curse or sentence pronounced upon father Adam! Does this "Doctor" of Divinity not know what ails our poor race? Does he not know that "By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world and death as a result of sin,--and thus death has passed upon all men"? Does he not know that this murderer's ailment is that he was mentally, morally and physically more than nine-tenths dead when he committed the crime,--else he would not have committed it?

What the man needed was a release from the curse he was under. He needed to have the Good Physician take him in charge mentally, physically and morally. He needed the very thorough, drastic treatment which the Lord tells us he proposes to give during the Millennium to all of our race who do not in the present age hear his voice and voluntarily enter his school.

Had this Doctor of Divinity and others done their duty, this poor man might have been released from some measure of his malady. They should have informed him respecting the teachings of God's Word. Those who look to them for bread should not be given stones! The unscriptural traditions of the dark ages respecting eternal torment are no longer believed by the people any more than by the clergy. Consequently, those lacking in moral stamina or in intellectual balance no longer have anything to restrain them. Such conclude that--as "orthodoxy" includes them when computing the Christians of the world, and teaches that all

Christians are bound for bliss the next moment after death--they will exercise faith in God and go sooner than some of their neighbors.

Who is to blame for these misconceptions? We answer, The Doctors of Divinity, who promulgate such false teachings. How differently this poor man would have felt on the subject of death had he been Scripturally taught, that death is the extinction of life, that life itself is most precious, and that in proportion as it is wisely used in harmony with the divine regulations; that an eternity of life and joy unspeakable has been made possible for all through the great sacrifice at Calvary; that it is attainable only through the acceptance of the Savior and obedience to his instructions. Who can say that the truth, thus presented to this weak mind might not have sobered it and steadied it; or, as the Apostle expresses the matter, it might have given this man the spirit of a sound mind.

This poor murderer and suicide was merely deliriously intoxicated with false doctrine, and we have no suspicion that the Great Judge will feel toward him as Dr. Burt expressed himself. The case is analogous to that of the saloon-keeper who kicked out the poor drunkard after he had taken his money for the vile stuff that robbed him of his senses. In our opinion the Great Judge will most severely arraign those who for the sake of money and popularity have dealt out the intoxicating errors. (Rev. 18:3.) He will have greater compassion upon their dupes, we are sure. "Ye know not what spirit ye are of: the Son of Man came not to destroy men's lives but to save them." (Luke 9:55,56.) Thank God for the coming Kingdom and its righteous judgments and assistances to all who are now blinded by the god of this world. (2 Cor. 4:4.) "Thy Kingdom come! Thy will be done on earth, even as it is done in heaven."

"CAN THE ETHIOPIAN CHANGE HIS SKIN?"

We answer, No. But all will admit that what the Ethiopian cannot do for himself God could readily do for him. The difference between the races of men and the differences between their languages have long been arguments against the solidarity of the human family. The doctrine of restitution has also raised the question, How could all men be brought to perfection and which color of skin was the original? The answer is now provided.

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God can change the Ethiopian's skin in his own due time.

Prof. H. A. Edwards, Supt. of Schools in Slater, Mo., has written for the public press an elaborate description

of how Julius Jackson, of New Frankfort, Mo., a negro boy of nine years, began to grow white in September, 1901, and is now fully nine-tenths white. He assures us that this is no whitish skin disease; but that the new white skin is as healthy as that of any white boy, and that the changed boy has never been sick and never has taken medicines. Realizing that his story would be doubted, he interested Dr. F. A. Howard, chief division surgeon of the Chicago and Alton Ry., who corroborates the statement in the following published extract from a letter:

"I am obliged to you for an opportunity of seeing and examining the negro child, Julius Jackson.

"I found his heart action, respiration and temperature perfectly normal and his mental faculties seem acute for one of his age.

"The white skin now covering at least 90 per cent. of his body is, so far as I am able to judge, in full possession of all its organs and those organs seem to be performing their natural functions--no roughness, chalky, or ashen appearance is present.

"It seems to me that the conditions warrant your opinion--the change is certainly caused by chemical conditions of the blood. Very truly,

"F. A. HOWARD."

NEW ENGLISH LAW PLEASES CATHOLICS.

The common schools of England are under religious control, and henceforth the dominant sect in each district will largely have control. Referring to this an exchange notes the following:--

"The Pope received an English pilgrimage, which, with the British residents of Rome, including the Duchess of Newcastle, numbered over three hundred persons.

"They were introduced by the Most Rev. Francis Bourne, archbishop of Westminster, and presented an offering of "Peter's Pence," besides an address containing

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the following passage:

"Next year a great measure in support of the freedom of religious teaching in education comes into force in England, Catholic children and teachers being gradually put on an equality with the most favored children and teachers of the nation. Your Holiness will welcome for us such a great act of justice, since it shows that among the English the last shadow of bigotry is dying out.'

"The Pope thanked and encouraged the pilgrims for their faith and loyalty to Rome and imparted the apostolic benediction."

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"BEHOLD THE GOODNESS AND SEVERITY OF GOD."

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. Be not deceived."--1 Cor. 6:9,10.

GOD'S SEVERITY consists in his insistence upon absolute righteousness--his refusal to approve sin in any sense or degree. The very first statement of the divine law is that death, destruction, must be the wage or penalty for transgression against his righteous regulations. For six thousand years the Lord has maintained this original position --has refused to sanction sin or permit sinners to live. Such an unchangeable attitude at first seems severe, especially when we consider that we were born in sin and shapen in iniquity, infested by weaknesses and surrounded by evil influences. It seems severe on God's part to insist upon perfection, when all of our experiences teach us that it is impossible for fallen humanity to attain absolute righteousness in word and deed and thought. Indeed the Scriptures confirm our experiences, declaring, "There is none righteous, no, not one."--Rom. 3:10.

The goodness of God is not seen in the severity, but, wholly separated, it stands side by side with it. God's goodness, his generosity, his mercy, kindness, love, which are not manifested in the sentence and in the execution of its penalties, are manifested in the great gift of his love--the Lord Jesus and the Redeemer provided in him--a redemption coextensive with the fall and with the condemnation. The Apostle expresses the matter pointedly in the words, "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." (I John 4:9.) God's love was not previously manifested; for over four thousand years only the severity, the justice of the divine character was manifested, though a hint was given to Abraham and subsequently through the prophets, that God had kind sentiments toward the fallen and tainted race, which in due time would bring blessings to all the families of the earth.

THE GOSPEL AGE A PARENTHESIS.

The period between the first advent of our Lord and his second advent is in some respects a parenthesis in the divine plan, during which the Church is specially dealt with, as we shall see later. The redemption of the world and its reconciliation with God, based upon divine goodness expressed in the death of the Redeemer, wait for its further expression to the world until the end of the Gospel age and the opening

of the Millennial age--"the world to come." When the morning of that new day shall dawn, the goodness of God will be seen more distinctly than ever by mankind. Indeed it may be said that the world as yet has seen nothing of the goodness of God; it has merely seen his severity, his justice, executed against the entire human family for the last six thousand years. A comparatively small proportion of humanity has ever heard of the grace of God in Christ, the "only name under heaven given among

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men, whereby we must be saved." And even those who have heard to some extent have been measurably deceived by the great Adversary in respect to the nature of the penalty for sin and the fullness and wideness of the mercy extended to men in the person of the Redeemer.

In that new dispensation the facts will all be made clear. The blessings then coming to the world --peace, righteous government, helpful influences, the restraint of evil, the knowledge of the Lord and understanding of his gracious arrangements and purposes --these will all be most convincing proofs to mankind of God's sympathy and mercy in Christ. The Adversary who now deceives mankind will then be bound, that he should not deceive the nations any more until the thousand years be finished, and the Word of God, which is in general now a sealed book to the world, will then be opened, and as a result the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep.

Nevertheless, we are not to understand that this triumph of God's mercy and goodness then displayed will in any wise imply a change of his character or of his attitude towards sin. God never changes; "He is the same yesterday, today and forever." (Heb. 13:8.) When we come to understand the matter thoroughly, this unchangeableness on God's part is a guarantee that the blessings to be bestowed under his arrangements will be everlasting, unending blessings.

The goodness and severity of God will be displayed side by side throughout the Millennial age to every creature. All must learn the lesson that God is kind, generous and full of blessing to all those who are in harmony with him and his principles of righteousness, but that he is and always will be like a consuming fire to all who are not in accord with righteousness.

REDEMPTION ONLY THE FIRST STEP TOWARD SALVATION.

The redemption of the world by the sacrifice of our Lord merely entitled humanity to a reawakening

from the sleep of death, to be granted an opportunity of full reconciliation to the Father. Not a reconciliation in sin, however, but a reconciliation in righteousness. It is manifest that no change takes place in the character of any during the sleep of death: the awakening must be to the same conditions of heart and mind that went down into death. The awakened ones will, therefore, find themselves at first in the same attitude of rebellion against God and the principles of righteousness that they were in when they went into death. But there will be this difference--that when awakened under the Kingdom conditions they will find their surroundings totally different from those of the present life: themselves the same, all things surrounding them will be changed. The powers of evil to tempt their fallen tendencies will be absent; temptations to selfishness, covetousness, etc., seen in the dominion of the prince of this world, shall find no part in the dominion of the prince of light, in the world to come--in the new dispensation. Indeed the awakened ones will find love and righteousness and kindness the laws in general force throughout the world.

And if their fallen tendencies shall still grasp after the selfish things as before, they will steadily learn the lesson that under the changed arrangements selfishness will not be advantageous to them but disadvantageous, bringing to them shame and contempt. Gradually they will learn the rules of the Kingdom, the laws of righteousness based upon justice and love. Gradually they may come into accord with these if they learn the lessons of experience during that golden age under the great Teacher, the Christ, Head and body, and under the immediate supervision of the earthly ones appointed to be their instructors and helpers in the good way and their correctors in respect to their fall. Instead of the rule which now prevails in the Church, namely, that "whosoever will live godly will suffer persecution," etc., they will find, instead, that whoever will live godly shall prosper and have increasing evidences of divine favor. In that day the ungodly shall suffer "stripes," "corrections in righteousness," "judgments," a prompt and just recompense of reward for every good and every evil deed.

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THE FATHER HATH COMMITTED ALL JUDGMENT TO THE SON.

The world then will be entirely in the hands of Christ, in whom the Father has centered all his mercy and all his provisions of grace. Only those who will then come into accord with the Son, the glorified Christ, and continue in accord with the laws of the

Millennial Kingdom--and none others--will be prepared by the close of the Millennial age to be delivered over directly to the Heavenly Father and the operations of his absolute law of justice without mercy. This is the period spoken of by the Apostle in I Cor. 15:24-28, when Immanuel shall have put down all sin, all unrighteousness, all insubordination to God; when he shall have raised up as many of the redeemed human family as would hear his voice, as would obey him--raised them up, up, up, to the very top notch of human perfection--to all that was lost in Adam, with, additionally, the large stores of knowledge gained through the fall, the redemption and the uplifting processes.

Nor need we fear the fact that the world will then be turned over to the Father's judgment and law of justice without mercy, because having reached perfection

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they will need no mercy. God's laws are not impossible to the perfect, but only to the imperfect, and by that time all the imperfections of all the willing and obedient will have been removed--all the blights and marks of sin in mind and in body will have been "blotted out."--Acts 3:19.

The angels who kept their first estate in obedience and perfection needed not an exercise of clemency toward them, needed no mercy, because they were not transgressors of the divine law. The law of the Lord is just and perfect and good, and every way desirable to and for those who are perfect. The difficulty of mankind under that perfect law, and their need for a Mediator and for clemency, all rest on the fact that as an entire race we are sold under sin through disobedience, and that we are all imperfect and prone to sin because of imperfection.

Thus seen God's law and exhortation to mankind in due time will be, "He that doeth righteousness is righteous; he who committeth sin is of the devil," the Adversary, and opposed to the divine being by being opposed to the divine regulations and arrangements of righteousness. God's attitude toward all wilful sinners during the Millennial age and at its close will be in full accord with the same severity which has always marked his attitude toward sin--a destructive severity --not a torturing severity, delighting in the anguish of the victim, but a just severity which has decreed, and will never alter the decree, that only those who love righteousness and hate iniquity shall have everlasting life on any plane.

THE OPERATION OF GOD'S GOODNESS AND SEVERITY TOWARD THE CHURCH DURING THIS GOSPEL AGE.

Having traced the operation of God's plan toward

the world, as he instructs us it will be carried out during the Millennial age, we now return to the still more important matter respecting the operation of God's goodness and severity toward ourselves--toward the Church during the present time. Why the Lord should make a difference between his dealings with the Church in this Gospel age and the world during the Millennial age can only be appreciated by those who accept the Scriptural declaration that during the present time God is making special selection of a special class, possessed of special characteristics and for a special service both now and hereafter. It is because of all these special features that the Church has a different experience from that which the world will have by and by.

All will agree that the reasonable, fair test that could justly be applied to mankind is the one which will be applied during the Millennial age to all the human family--a test under fair conditions, as favorable to righteousness as to sin, and more so, a test as to loyalty to principles of righteousness. But in the present time God makes a test which might be considered a severer one than would be fair, and hence this testing is not a general or world-wide test, but is confined to a limited number, who are assured in the Scriptures that in being granted this extra severe testing God is showing them a great favor. The favor belongs mainly to the future, and hence, as the Lord and the apostles everywhere pointed out, the inspiring incentive presented to this favored and specially called class is a hope, a future hope of glory, honor and immortality, joint-heirship with our Lord in the Kingdom privileges and blessings of the Millennial age and subsequently to all eternity.

"THINK IT NOT STRANGE CONCERNING THE FIERY TRIALS WHICH SHALL TRY YOU."

To this class are given fiery trials, temptations, etc., more than justice, equity, would call for. It is required of this class in its call that they not only love righteousness and hate iniquity, but that they shall do so at the cost of the sacrifice not only of the pleasures of sin but also at the cost of many reasonable pleasures, comforts, joys, etc., which are not of themselves unrighteous. This class are called to be sacrificers, and are distinctly told that if they would come up to the requirements of their call they must be prepared not only to resist sin and weaknesses of their own flesh and temptations from others, but additionally to suffer for their well-doing, to suffer for godliness, for righteousness--to be evil-spoken of falsely for the Lord's cause' sake. They are even informed that unless they suffer chastisements, trials, persecutions, oppositions of some kind in the present time, they lack the evidences of adoption into God's family as new

creatures: "For what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? If ye be without chastisement then are ye bastards and not sons"--not new creatures. Heb. 12:8.

It is with this class that our text especially deals; for while the whole world is blind to the precious things of the Word of God, nevertheless, when the new dispensation shall have been fully ushered in and the Sun of righteousness shall have shed forth his beams and scattered all the night of darkness, evidently the Lord's Word, which is now our lamp, will not be the only instructor and guide of the world--having been supplanted by the full light. That which is perfect having come, that which is in part will be esteemed only as a precious friend, whose testimony will be in full accord with all the gracious manifestations of divine love, wisdom and power then resulting.

The Apostle is addressing the Church when he speaks of the goodness and severity of God, and it is highly important that we apply his words correctly. The Church has perceived the severity of divine justice, and has also been granted the opening of the eyes

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of understanding to discern the Goodness of God in the provision of the Savior and the blessings which flow to us through him. The Church has tasted of the good Word of God and been made partaker of his holy Spirit, has come to some knowledge of the powers of the age to come and the blessings then to be actually conferred. Now she rejoices in all these things by faith--faith in God, faith in Christ, faith in the grand outcome as delineated in the Scriptures. The words of our text are specially applicable to this very class in this very time, as we have just seen. They will also be applicable to the world in its trial-time in the coming age.

Now, the Lord speaks to the New Creation, saying, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived." At first we are inclined to stand amazed and say, God has made no provision for our attaining actual perfection, all the provisions for such restitution belonging to the next age! How then can he require righteousness of us, who still have the blemished bodies, imperfect judgments, etc., resulting from the fall? After telling us that there is none righteous, no, not one, how shall we understand the declaration that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God--not be joint-heirs with Christ in the Kingdom--not inherit the glorious things which we have hoped for by the Lord's grace? The answer is that God has made special provision for the Church of this Gospel age. Instead of making us perfect in the flesh, and then requiring absolute perfection in word, deed and

thought, as will be required of the world at the close of the next age, the Lord deals with us in an imputed manner. To those who exercise the requisite faith he imputes righteousness, which offsets the unrighteousness or natural blemishes of their flesh. But only to those who exercise the faith is there such an imputation of Christ's righteousness; those who cannot exercise the faith are still in their sins, aliens from God until the coming of the new dispensation, when the blotting out of sins will begin in an actual way. But to those who do believe and to whom the righteousness of Christ is imputed because of faith, there is still a testing of the heart.

It would be useless for the Lord to offer the prize of joint-heirship in the Kingdom to anyone perfect in the flesh when there are none such--our Lord Jesus being the only one, and he because he was not of the Adamic stock. God's provision, therefore, is that the justified by faith shall be counted perfect, counted righteous so long as their hearts, their wills, their best endeavors, are for righteousness. How simple and yet how sublime this arrangement, how it adapts itself to all the circumstances and conditions of the Lord's people! It is respecting this justification by faith, this "righteousness of God by faith," that the Apostle, says, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"--being justified freely from all things.--Rom. 5:1.

SEE THAT YE RECEIVE NOT THE GRACE OF GOD IN
VAIN.

There is danger, however, here: some are disposed to take advantage of God's grace and kindness and mercy, and while willingly, knowingly indulging

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in sin, to hope for justification in sin instead of from sin. The Apostle is bringing this matter to our attention, and implies that there is great need of care. He says, "Be not deceived." God knoweth the heart: we might deceive ourselves but we cannot deceive the Lord. It behooves us, therefore, to be on our guard respecting righteousness, justice, to see that the sentiments of our hearts are continually in opposition to unrighteousness, to sin, to all in-equity. The Apostle proceeds to point out that faith in Christ, and the acceptance of the divine law as our regulation principle in life, mean more than faith in the Lord Jesus. They mean our very best endeavors to speak and act and think in accord with the divine will--namely, in accord with righteousness.

THE "MARK" MUST BE ATTAINED, ELSE THE PRIZE
WILL NOT BE OURS.

There is no standstill for the New Creature. He must go on and reach a certain standard of perfection, else he cannot be counted in as one of the Kingdom class. The Apostle does indeed speak of the New Creatures as at first being babes in Christ, but the Kingdom will not be made up of babes in Christ, but of overcomers, and the overcoming is not, as we know, a matter of age or physical stature, but a matter of spiritual development, of growth in grace and knowledge and love. We are to grow in love, and love is the principle thing, but before we can make much development in the cultivation of love, we must learn to be just, right, righteous. It is a proper presentation of the matter that is given in the proverb, that a man should be just before he is generous.

It behooves the Lord's people, therefore, the New Creation, that they study this subject of justice continually, and daily put into practice the lessons inculcated in the divine Word. All of the saints must be the foes of sin. Wherever sin is they must wage a warfare against it, and see to it that in their hearts at least they are free from sin, that in their hearts they do not countenance sin but oppose it, that sin finds no harboring place or sympathizing weakness in their hearts. This will make them radical as respects the words of their mouths, the conduct of life and the meditations of their hearts, that all of these shall be in absolute accord with the divine Word and its spirit

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of righteousness, holiness, truth, etc. Such as get this proper foundation of character before they begin to build love will find that they are making progress properly. All love that is founded upon injustice or wrong ideas of righteousness is delusive, is not the love which the Lord will require as the test of discipleship.

"BE NOT DECEIVED."

The Apostle's words in our text, "Be not deceived," imply just what we see all about us: that many profess to be the Lord's people, profess to love him, profess the golden rule as their guide in life, and yet are blind to justice (righteousness) in many of the affairs of life. They exercise too much mercy in dealing with their own shortcomings and too little when examining the faults and weaknesses of others.

The Apostle proceeds to specify some of the unrighteous, unjust things to which the Lord's people should find themselves opposed. As these are examined individually they are all found to contain a weakness in favor of self at the expense of others; they all imply an injustice to others for the pleasure or advantage

of self. Some of these unrighteous things specified are very gross, and one might suppose would be recognized as unrighteous even by worldly people; yet the Apostle intimates that some who profess to be the Lord's people have such lax ideas of justice that they do not perceive how abominable these unrighteous matters are--fornication, adultery, thievery, drunkenness, etc. Those who find themselves in any degree of sympathy with these evil qualities, these unrighteous acts, are deceived if they think themselves to be the Lord's people. "God is not mocked: he that doeth righteousness is righteous."--Gal. 6:7.

In other words, it is in vain that we profess to be the Lord's people, profess to be the servants of righteousness and truth, and love these principles, if our conduct clearly demonstrates that we love unrighteousness. For such persons to profess to be the Lord's people is to mock God by assuming that he cannot read the heart, and that what may be hidden to some extent from earthly beings is equally hidden from the Almighty with whom we have to do. He that doeth righteousness is not necessarily he only who is perfect, but rather he that doeth righteousness to the extent of his best ability and who is trusting in the Redeemer's merit to compensate unintentional shortcomings--he is righteous in God's sight--he is approved.

VARYING MANIFESTATIONS OF SELFISHNESS, SIN.

The Apostle proceeds to specify other unrighteous conduct, not so gross as the sins already enumerated, but nevertheless wholly inconsistent with membership in the Kingdom class. These are specified as covetousness, revilings, extortioners, etc. Those who have made any advancement in the Christian way, we may surely trust, are far from having sympathy with the gross evils; and they may therefore have special need to examine themselves carefully in regard to these other more subtle evil qualities, deleterious to their interests as prospective heirs with Christ in the Kingdom. What is covetousness but selfishness--the desire to have, possess, enjoy something at the expense of another? What is idolatry but selfishness, the idolizing of money or fame or influence or child or self or some other creature, exalted to and receiving the honor due to the Almighty?

What is reviling but an exhibition of selfishness again, which takes this method of doing injury to the feelings or to the reputation of another?--evil speaking is classed by the Apostle in another place as one of the works of the flesh and of the devil. It is wholly out of harmony with justice and the golden rule,--for who would like to be reviled or evil spoken of?--it is therefore injustice, unrighteousness, and cannot be the disposition of those who are in any degree begotten of

the Spirit and growing in grace. What is extortion but selfishness, injustice, unrighteous dealings with others?--accepting from them, either because of ignorance or stress of circumstances, such money or valuables as are not fully, justly, righteously due.

SOWING AND REAPING--TO THE FLESH OR TO THE SPIRIT.

The Apostle in another epistle repeats these words, "Be not deceived;" and adds, "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap; for he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." (Gal. 6:7,8.) He is not addressing the world; it is the New Creation that is either sowing to the flesh or sowing to the Spirit, and that either will reap of the flesh or reap of the Spirit. We sow to the flesh every time we allow the fleshly, selfish, unjust, unrighteous desires of the flesh to have sway in our hearts and lives, and each sowing makes easier the additional sowing and makes more sure the end of that way which is death--Second Death. On the contrary each sowing to the Spirit, each resistance to the desires of the flesh toward selfishness, etc., and each exercise of the new mind, of the new will, in spiritual directions toward the things that are pure, the things that are noble, the things that are good, the things that are true, is a sowing to the Spirit, which will bring forth additional fruits of the Spirit, graces of the Spirit, and which, persevered in, will ultimately bring us in accord with the Lord's gracious promises and arrangements--everlasting life and the Kingdom.

"LET NO MAN DECEIVE YOU."

The Apostle John has a word to say also about

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the danger of being deceived after we have become New Creatures in Christ. His words are, "Let no man deceive you; he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." (I John 3:7,8.) The Apostle is not speaking here of some one whose heart is loyal to the Lord and who is momentarily overtaken in a fault, for he declares respecting such that there is forgiveness for them because of the weakness or the ignorance which permitted them to be ensnared. He is, however, speaking most distinctly of a willingness of the heart to sin, to do unrighteousness. He indicates a great truth when he suggests that there are but two sides to the question,--that

Satan is on the side of sin, and that all who love and with willingness practise sin are on his side. On the other side of the question are the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself as the Redeemer of mankind, that he might destroy Satan and all who sympathize with Satan in their opposition to God and his righteous arrangements.

"LET US EXAMINE OURSELVES."

The Apostle continues, "Whosoever is born [begotten] of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin because he is born [begotten] of God." The thought is that those begotten of the good seed of Truth, begotten of the holy Spirit, cannot, so long as that seed of Truth and the Spirit of the Lord is alive in them, wilfully, deliberately turn to sin to practise it. If such should turn to sin wilfully and deliberately it would be conclusive evidence that the seed, the holy Spirit with which they had been begotten as children of God, had perished.

The Apostle adds, "In this the children of God are manifest from the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God--neither he who loveth not his brother." Here again the question is sharply drawn as between the children of God and

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the children of the devil. All who are on the side of righteousness are on God's side. These will love justice and oppose selfishness, and sin which is related to selfishness, in every sense and in every degree compatible with their opportunities and commission. But this is not enough: they must do more than love to do what is right; they must have such a love for the truth as would even lead them to sacrifice their rights on behalf of the Lord or any of his "brethren." If we have tasted that the Lord is gracious, is good, we have tasted also that he is just, and in that sense of the word, severe. Let us then, while rejoicing in divine favor, see to it that we walk circumspectly, and that our walk in life is not after the flesh, which leads more or less directly to death, but after the Spirit, after righteousness, after Truth, all of which lead, under the Lord's blessing and guidance, to everlasting life and the Kingdom honors and glories with our dear Redeemer.

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"HE MAKETH THE STORM A CALM."--PSA. 107:29.

--MARK 4:35-41.--MARCH 6.--

OUR Lord's ministry is supposed to have covered two years at the time of the miracle of the calming of the sea, recorded in this lesson. After the selection of the twelve apostles and the Sermon on the Mount, etc., our Lord returned to Capernaum and soon after began his second tour of Galilee. It was during this interim that he awakened from the sleep of death the son of the widow of Nain--the first recorded instance of its kind in our Lord's ministry. Then came teachings by parables, and in the afternoon of a busy day of teaching--after three o'clock, while still sitting in one of the boats as on a former occasion, having concluded his teachings--he directed that the boat be taken to the opposite side of the lake. The multitude, after being informed that the discourses were ended, were dismissed, and without delay the boat was started. From the various accounts we judge that all the twelve disciples were with him, and apparently other "men"--seamen, as Matthew's account implies.

Travelers tell us that the Sea of Galilee is quite subject to wind storms. Dr. Thompson, describing his own experiences on this little sea, says: "The sun had scarcely set when the wind began to rush down toward the lake; and it continued all night long with constantly increasing violence, so that when we reached the shore the next morning the face of the lake was like a huge cauldron. The wind hurled down every wady from the north-east and east with such fury that no efforts of rowers could have brought a boat to shore at any point along that coast. To understand the causes of these sudden tempests, we must remember that the lake lies low, 600 feet lower than the ocean; that the vast and naked plateaus of the Jaulan rise to a great height, spreading backward to the wilds of Hauran, and upward to snowy Mt. Hermon; that the watercourses have cut out profound ravines and wide gorges, converging to the head of the lake, and that these act like gigantic funnels to draw down the cold winds from the mountains."

"WE ARE NOT IGNORANT OF HIS DEVICES."

Our own opinion is that "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2) had something to do in the development of this storm--that it had more than natural causes, although the latter might have assisted or even been sufficient. We remember that the Adversary had

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already endeavored to induce our Lord to leap from the pinnacle of the Temple, but had not succeeded. Apparently now he would drown him in the sea. But the Lord, who declares himself able to make the wrath of man to praise him, caused the wrath of Satan or the wildness of the elements, whichever it was that induced the storm, to praise him--to show forth his mighty

power.

During the storm our Lord lay asleep in the hinder part of the vessel on a cushion. Evidently he was thoroughly exhausted from the labors of his journey and ministry. Meantime, as the storm increased, the boat with its precious load began to fill with water more rapidly than it could be bailed out. No wonder the disciples, fishermen and experts at sea though they were, were alarmed. We cannot avoid the thought that in some manner the Lord's providence had something to do with his prolonged sleep under such circumstances, and that the intention was to put the faith of the disciples to the test. They had seen his mighty works, his healing of the sick, and his awakening of the dead, and they had heard his teachings and had taken a miraculous catch of fish under his direction where they had failed before, and by this time they should have had considerable faith in his power every way. The fact that they approached him at all indicates that they did have faith to some degree, though not implicit faith.

The slightly different accounts of the event given by Matthew, Mark and Luke, some one has paraphrased as follows,--Matthew: "Save, Lord, we perish;" Mark: "Teacher, carest thou not that we perish?" Luke: "Master, Master, we perish." All three accounts are correct --one disciple cried out in one way and others in different words. Some one puts it thus: "Little Faith prayed, 'Save us;' Much Fear cried, 'We perish;' Distrust urged, 'Carest thou not?' More Faith said, 'Lord;' Discipleship cried out, 'Teacher;' Faint Hope cried, 'Master, thou with authority.'" Jesus arose (awoke) and commanded peace and quiet, which immediately followed. The record mentions the cessation of the wind and additionally the calming of the sea. Some one might claim that a storm which came up suddenly might happen to stop with equal suddenness, but this would not account for the calming of the sea. Waters thus lashed to a fury could not be calmed thus quickly except by superhuman power. This, indeed, we may assume to be a prominent feature of the miracle.

It is rather peculiar that the Greek word used for "Be still" in this text is the same word used by our Lord to the demon. (Mark 1:25.) This rather corroborates the suggestion foregoing respecting the storm being the work of the Adversary. In any event this miracle shows clearly that storms should not be accredited, as they frequently are, to divine malevolence; for if the Father had caused the storm the Son would not have interfered with it. We do not wish to intimate, either, that every storm is of Satanic origin; we do not dispute that many of them arise from natural causes; but we do hold that some of them are supernatural and of the Adversary, and as a Scriptural evidence along this line we cite the whirlwind raised up by Satan, which smote the house in which Job's children were

feasting.--Job 1:13,19.

That our Lord intended this experience to be a lesson to the disciples, along the line of faith in him, seems to be borne out by verses 40,41. He said unto them, "Why are ye fearful? Have ye not yet faith?" Has your faith not yet developed to such a degree that you can trust me, and realize the Father's favor and power ever with me for my protection, and that while with me no harm could possibly overtake you--nothing that is not wholly under my control? No wonder the apostles gained additional reverence for the Lord as a result of this miracle. Apparently it came just in the right time and order to be their appropriate lesson. In fact we may conclude that every item of their experience and every item of our Lord's conduct, teaching and mighty works was especially for the instruction of these twelve, who were to be his witnesses to us and to the nations of the earth respecting that ministry.

SPIRITUAL LESSONS FOR THE SPIRITUAL HOUSEHOLD.

There is a precious lesson in this miracle for all of the Lord's followers outside of the apostleship, too. We also have need of faith and need of tests to our faith. Our daily experiences since we became the Lord's followers have been guided and guarded apparently by the power unseen, to the intent that as pupils in the school of Christ, we may all be taught of him and develop more and more of the graces of the Spirit, and particularly more and more faith. How important this item of faith is we probably cannot fully appreciate now. It seems to be one thing that the Lord specially seeks for in those now called to be followers. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." "With faith all things are possible." Proper faith is understood, of course, not credulity, not reliance upon the words of men, but implicit faith in the Lord for all that he has promised. "According to thy faith be it unto thee."

So important a grace must of necessity require many lessons for its proper development, and it does not surprise us that in our individual experiences as Christians we find those which correspond to the experiences of the apostles noted in this lesson. How suddenly the Adversary may at times bring against us a whirlwind of temptation or of opposition or of persecution. How at such times our sky seems overcast, dark, foreboding; how the waves of adversity or affliction have almost overwhelmed us, and how the Lord seemed

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asleep and heedless of our distress and indifferent to our necessities! Such experiences are tests of our faith, as this one was a test to the faith of the apostles. If our faith be strong enough under such circumstances, we would keep on with our proper endeavors to adjust

matters corresponding to the bailing of the boat and the working of the oars; but meantime, with an implicit faith in the Lord's promise that "all things shall work together for our good," we would be able to sing as did the Apostle Paul and Silas after being beaten while in the stocks for their faithfulness to the Lord. They rejoiced that they were accounted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ. So according to our faith will we be able to rejoice even in tribulation. We cannot enjoy the sufferings; we can enjoy the thought which faith attaches to them, namely, that these are but light afflictions working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Each experience of this kind should be helpful to us. If at first we were fearful and cried aloud, by and by we received the succor, with perhaps the reprimand, "O, thou of little faith;" but as lesson after lesson has come to us, the Master will expect--and we should expect of ourselves--greater faith, greater trust, greater peace, greater joy in the Lord, greater confidence in his presence with us and his care over us, and in his power to deliver us from the Adversary and from every evil thing, and to bring us eventually in safety to the port we seek--the heavenly Kingdom.

THE CHURCH'S EXPERIENCES PREFIGURED.

Some one has suggested, apparently on reasonable grounds, that this experience of Jesus and the Apostles in the boat during the night pictured the experiences of the Church during this Gospel age. The Lord assured his people, saying, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the age," and "I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also," and "nothing shall by any means hurt you," etc. The Lord's faithful people all through this age have realized with more or less distinctness the certainty of these precious promises; they have felt that the Lord indeed is with his Church; yet it has seemed at times as though he were asleep, inattentive to the prayers of his faithful, and inattentive to their cries and groans. For eighteen centuries his dear ones have been tempest-tossed by the Adversary, persecuted, afflicted, buffeted--all through this dark night, in which the only light available has been "thy Word a light to my feet." The experiences of others in the past are our experiences in the present.

We of today represent the Lord's cause in the midst of the raging elements of human passions, oppositions, etc.; and as the Apostle declares of his day, so it is still true that "we wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high positions." The storms may seem to come from the world, but really beyond the world is the Adversary. "We are not ignorant of his devices;" our hearts would be at times dismayed except as faith is able to see the Lord with us in the ship, and able to

grasp the thought of his mighty power in his own time and way to speak peace to the world.

Soon the time will come for him who careth for us to exert his great power on our behalf, to deliver his people, to say to the raging elements, Peace, be still. Then will follow the great calm, the great rest from the evil one for a thousand years, for he shall be bound that he shall deceive the nations no more. Then will come the eternal rest of the heart to all who are now in the boat with the Lord, and then will come the opportunity for all these to be co-laborers with him in the great and glorious work of blessing the world. It must not surprise us, however, if a dark hour is before us--if the time will come when the stormy winds will be so fierce that many will cry out in fear and trembling. Let us learn well the precious experiences of the present time, so that then our faith shall not fail us--so that in the darkest hour we shall be able to sing and to rejoice in him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood, and to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb.

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BARGAINS THAT WERE COSTLY.

--MATT. 14:1-12.--MARCH 13.--

Golden Text:--"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."--Rev. 2:10.

JOHN THE BAPTIST had been imprisoned about a year when he was beheaded, as narrated in this lesson. He had preached only about a year, but in that time evidently made a profound impression throughout Palestine--an impression, however, which signally failed to accomplish the purpose intended by him--failed to prepare the hearts of the people, through repentance and contrition for sin, to receive Jesus as the Messiah. Josephus supposes that he was confined in a dungeon connected with the castle Macherus. Geike gives us his opinion of the kind of dungeon in these words: "Perhaps a cage of iron bars like one I saw at Gaza, to which friends of the prisoner could come with food or for gossip, but with no conveniences or provision of any kind for living or sleeping, and only a bare stone floor." This would account for John's ability to send his disciples to Jesus, inquiring, "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" We cannot wonder that his experiences were in some respects disappointing to him, though from our standpoint

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we can see that he did the work which the Father

intended. This may serve as a lesson to us. We, too, should do our parts faithfully as unto the Lord and leave all the results in his hands, assured of his wisdom and power to overrule all things to the final accomplishment of his gracious purposes. The words of the poet are appropriate to John and to many other faithful souls,--

"We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;
In feelings, not in figures on a dial. He most lives
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.
That life is long which answers life's great end."

As there is a striking resemblance between John and Elijah, his type, so there is a strong resemblance between the experiences of John and those of the faithful Church,--the great antitype of Elijah. While Elijah fled from Ahab, his real persecutor was Jezebel, who sought his life. So John the Baptist was apprehended and finally executed by Herod, but his real opponent was Herod's wife, Herodias. Similarly the greater Elijah, the faithful body of Christ in the flesh, has suffered and will yet suffer further at the hands of civil power, yet the real persecutor behind the civil power has been the antitypical Jezebel mentioned in Revelation 2:20--the antitypical Herodias--the nominal Church adulterously allied to the kingdoms of this world while nominally espoused to Christ. All Bible students will recognize the various pictures of this apostasy in Revelation, whether they understand the resemblance distinctly or not.

HEROD, HERODIAS AND SALOME.

Herod the Great left several sons ambitious to be his successor. Herodias married the eldest of these, anticipating that thus she would become the queen. The Roman Emperor decided otherwise and chose Antipas, the Herod of this lesson. Thereupon Herodias, still strong-willed and ambitious to be a queen, brought her captivating influences to bear upon Antipas, induced him to repudiate his former wife, and to accept her as queen instead. John the Baptist, preaching against sin, had evidently declared in public against this unlawful union--declared that Herod and his wife were living in adultery--the king separated from his own wife and improperly associated with his brother Philip's wife. We cannot wonder that such haughty, ambitious, and lawlessly disposed persons as Herod and Herodias must have been should feel resentment against any preacher who would dare to call in question the conduct of the regal pair. The result was the imprisonment of John. Evidently this course was instigated by Herodias, who had everything to fear from John's preaching. If Herod should feel conscience-stricken, or if the people should become aroused to such an extent

as to influence his course aside from his conscience, the results would surely be disastrous to her interests. She would not only lose the high social position she had sacrificed her life to attain, but she would lose everything and become a homeless wretch. Evidently she strove to incite her husband to put John to death at the time he was imprisoned; but her influence was offset by Herod's fear of the effect of such a course upon the people, who esteemed John to be a prophet.

The queen, still plotting, determined to take advantage of the king's birthday festival. She knew the king's disposition, and that on such occasions it was customary to have great hilarity and to use intoxicating beverages with more than usual freedom. It was the custom of the time for such gatherings of men to be entertained by dancing girls in more or less transparent garments, executing voluptuous dances; and the queen arranged that the king's party, as a special honor, on this occasion should be served by her daughter by her former marriage, Salome. Her scheme was extremely successful: the king and his courtiers were charmed, and instead of the paltry gift usual on such occasions, the king, under the heat of wine and his admiration for his adopted daughter, told her to ask whatever she desired--even to the half of his kingdom (Mark says).

THE KING'S BAD BARGAIN.

Only a judgment unbalanced by excitement and alcohol could have made so rash a promise, and bound it with several oaths, as the original indicates. Here is one of the advantages possessed by the Lord's people. They are not only protected from such excesses and the distortions of natural judgment caused thereby, but additionally, as the Apostle intimates, they receive the "spirit of a sound mind." (2 Tim. 1:7.) The mind of Christ, the disposition of Christ, lifts the heart from such follies and places it upon more reasonable things. It gives us a truer estimation of values. Whereas

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the spirit of the world, the spirit of pride, the spirit of ambition no less than the spirit of envy, tends to pervert the judgment, to give false conceptions of value.

Along this line we call to mind various bad bargains: amongst others that of Esau, who for a mess of pottage sold his birthright as the first-born of Isaac, the natural heir of the Abrahamic promise. We call to mind Judas' bad bargain, by which he received thirty pieces of silver, sold his Lord, and lost everything. Herod's was one of these bad or costly bargains. He lost his peace of mind as the lesson records--"The king was sorry." We may be sure that his mind was frequently

disturbed with the thought of his injustice, and the further thought that quite probably his crime was against one of the Lord's special favorites--against a

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prophet. The popularity of Jesus did not evidently become so general until after John's death. Herod, hearing of the matter about that time, was perplexed, and wondered whether or not there might be some truth in the Grecian theories that the dead were not dead, but had power to communicate through other living persons, after the manner of spirits through mediums in the present day. His mind was troubled, yet he was not penitent.

Similar conditions prevail today: people do those things which they recognize to be wrong, they violate their consciences, they feel sorry; yet this is not the godly sorrow, for, as the Apostle explains, a godly sorrow --a sorrow of the kind which God recognizes and appreciates--leads to repentance. Every other sorrow is apt to have an injurious effect merely, but a godly sorrow is profitable. It leads to repentance, to reformation, to reconciliation with God through his appointed provision in Jesus. Let us as the Lord's people seek to be filled with the Lord's spirit, and proportionately emptied of the worldly spirit, the spirit of intoxication and the spirit of self-will, and have the spirit of a new mind, of a sound mind. Yet if any find himself in sin through yielding to the desires of the flesh, let him remember that each step in the downward way is a step to be retraced if ever any good shall result, or is to be attained in the future. Let such make haste at any cost to seek the Lord, and to be purged, washed, cleansed, in the merit of the precious blood, and henceforth more than ever be on their guard against sin.

DID JOHN ACT IMPRUDENTLY?

It is not for us to sit in judgment upon the course of John the Baptist, to determine whether or not he exceeded his duty in his criticism of the king and queen. We are inclined, however, to think that he did exceed his duty. So far as we may be able to judge, there were many officials at the time against whom serious charges might have been brought by Jesus and the apostles, yet we have no evidence that any of these ever took the course which John took. Jesus was before Pilate, and, later on, was before this very Herod, yet we have no record that he ever said a word on the subject concerning which John felt free to speak; Paul was personally before Agrippa and Felix and others prominent in that time, some of whom, according to history, were disreputable men, yet he made no personal attack upon them, and his only appeal was to Agrippa, "I would that thou wert altogether as I am, except these bonds,"

and this was in reply to Agrippa's remark, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

In our understanding of the teachings of the Scriptures it is not the duty of the Lord's people to go through the world rebuking sin, but preaching the Gospel. It is the Gospel, which we preach by our words and by our lives, that is the "power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." We emphasize this, because it is our observation that some of the Lord's people feel it their duty to copy John's course in such matters rather than to copy the Lord Jesus and the apostles, and we believe that herein they err. The Gospel is not sent to break men's hearts but to bind up the broken-hearted--to heal those whose hearts are already broken. Sin and its natural penalties are the sledgehammers which are breaking men's hearts. The great time of trouble which is approaching is God's method apparently for the breaking of the hearts of the whole world--to prepare them for the balm of Gilead and the general blessings of the Millennial age which shall follow it. He who uses the Gospel as a hammer has mistaken his commission, which for the whole Christ reads, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted," etc.--Isa. 61:1.

A PARENT'S INFLUENCE, FOR GOOD OR EVIL.

The power of Herodias over Herod is illustrated by her power over her daughter Salome. The king's generous offer must have carried weight in the mind of a young girl. Riches, splendors, apparel, palaces, apparently flitted before her mind; but as her previous course had been under her mother's direction, she now sought the mother's advice, "What shall I ask?" (Mark 6:24.) Here we have an illustration of parental influence. Evil woman as she was, Herodias evidently had retained the affection of her daughter and her absolute confidence and obedience. It was hers to direct the young mind into good or evil channels. To some extent this is true of every parent, particularly of every mother. How great, then, is the responsibility of fathers and mothers for the course of their children! The spirit of a sound mind in the Lord's people will certainly prompt them to use this mighty influence, which is theirs by natural relationship and opportunity, so as to guide those under their direction into right paths.

Alas, how some, even Christian mothers, fail to seize such opportunities and to direct their children in the heavenly ways. They seem to have so much of the worldly spirit themselves that, even while desiring to sacrifice their own earthly interests for the cause of the Lord and to lay up treasure in heaven, they shrink from having their children participate, failing to realize that wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness and that all other paths lead to present and future

trouble. They fail to appreciate the Apostle's words, "Present your bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." Every other course is unreasonable, irrational, unwise.

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Some one has put these words into the mother's mouth in answer to the daughter's desires for the great things proffered her by the king: "Little fool, you know not what you ask: what would all these things be to you and me unqueened and outcast, as we may be any day if John the Baptist live?" The mother's thought evidently was that with the Prophet out of the way all other advantages were accessible to herself and her daughter. She bade her daughter ask for the head of the Prophet and that at once, here, now, on a charger (one of the large platters used at the feast). Haste was deemed necessary lest the king's ardor should cool and his better judgment take control--while the flush of excitement and liquor was upon him, and while his counselors were present who had heard the oath, and before whom any indecision in respect to a prisoner would stultify himself. The king yielded, yet Herodias was not saved from the fate she dreaded; for history records that within ten years her ambition prompted Herod, against his better judgment, to solicit at Rome an additional dignity. The request was refused, and Herod was deprived of his dominion and banished to Lyons in Gaul, where he died.

POSSIBILITIES OF THE FUTURE TO US.

We have already referred to the fact that John the Baptist was an antitype to Elijah, and to the fact that the Gospel Church, Head and body, the Christ in the flesh, is still the higher and grander antitype. For eighteen centuries or more this grander Elijah has been preaching righteousness in the world and calling for repentance, etc., announcing the coming of the Christ, the glorified Church, as the Kingdom of God to judge and to bless the world. As Elijah only found a few loyal to God in Israel, so Elijah the second found only a few ready to meet Jesus in the flesh, and similarly the great antitypical Elijah (the Church in the flesh) has found only a few, a little flock, to heed and to properly prepare for the Kingdom. Nevertheless it is the work designed, and, as foretold by the Prophet Malachi, the failure to accomplish larger results means that the Kingdom will be introduced not peaceably but forcefully; that in order to the establishment of the King of Glory as the Prince of the earth it will be necessary to smite the nations with the rod of iron, to break them in pieces as a potter's vessel, that all the Gentiles may seek unto the Lord, and that the knowledge of the Lord may fill the whole earth, that his Kingdom may

come, and his will be done on earth as in heaven.

Another point here: The first Jezebel persecuted the first Elijah so that he fled into the wilderness, and even after his coming again and performing a great miracle and turning the hearts of some to the Lord, he was a second time obliged to flee from Jezebel, who sought his life. In the case of the second Elijah, John the Baptist, the experiences were somewhat similar, and the Herodias Jezebel succeeded eventually in accomplishing the destruction of the Prophet. In the case of the third Elijah (the Church in the flesh) the woman Jezebel is mentioned by name (Rev. 2:20); and her pernicious work, the flight of the Church into the wilderness (Rev. 12:6), and her return from the wilderness condition since Reformation times are all known. Now we are to anticipate a second attack upon the true Church (not upon the nominal system), and this may mean, as in the case of John the Baptist, a second and a seemingly complete victory of the Babylonish woman and her paramour, the world, over the faithful members of the body of Christ in the flesh. We shall certainly not be surprised if the matter so results; but this and all things must work together for good to those

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who love the Lord. We must all die to win our heavenly prizes beyond the veil. The Elijah class this side the veil must and will be vanquished, but the apparent defeat only hastens the Kingdom glories, powers and blessings promised. "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life."

GO TELL IT TO JESUS.

The disciples of John knew where to go with the message--where to find sympathy and consolation in respect to their loss. There is a lesson for us in this. To whom shall we go with trials, difficulties, sorrows, troubles, disappointments? The Lord invites us to come to him with everything which is too heavy for ourselves, with every care. He cares for us and will grant the blessing to trusting souls. Doubtless those who went to Jesus became his disciples, and thus their trials in connection with their leader and teacher brought them into closer knowledge and fellowship with the great Teacher. And so it will be doubtless with those who are the friends of the Lord's people at the present time: the vengeance of the antitypical Jezebel upon the antitypical Elijah will move their friends and associates to still greater love and interest, and will be the means of attracting more closely to the Lord the "Great Company."

OUR GOLDEN TEXT.

Those who prepared the lesson evidently did not see that John the Baptist belongs to a separate class of the saved from those addressed in the text. No promise was made to John of a crown of life. That promise belongs to us, the Gospel Church--called chosen, and faithful. John, however, will have a great blessing, for we mark again our Lord's words, "There hath not arisen a greater prophet than John the Baptist--and yet I say unto you that the least in the Kingdom is greater than he."

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